

LONDON SOCIETY.

JULY, 1870.



Engraved by Charles Keene.

IN THE SOLIST.

See p. 32.

HEIRESS-HUNTING.

THERE are certain persons who, at certain times of life, lay themselves out with great vigour and address for the absorbing pursuit of heiress-hunting. At first sight, at least, it is one of the quickest and pleasantest ways of making a great pot of money—by one coup you may sweep into your coffers more money than the work of years could give—but at the same time it is a monetary truth that large gains are not made without heavy ventures. There is

a great parallel between the hunting of hares and the hunting of heiresses. In each of them, despite Assheton Smith's pleasant theory that the fox highly enjoys fox-hunting, I think poor pussy has decidedly the worst of it, and is not much considered by the harriers. It must be allowed that in the long run there will probably be a heavy quittance exacted for his selfishness, and it must also be allowed that fortune-hunters are by no means confined to heiress-

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hunters. Young ladies and their mammas are popularly supposed to have some appreciation of this business of amusement. For the present occasion we limit our remarks to the case of heiress-hunting.

And one heartily is sorry for the poor heiress. Her chances of happiness are certainly much more remote than those of less wealthy young ladies. In the first place, the poor girl is often the only child. There are occasionally families so wealthy that every girl has a fortune, and a good one, although the girls are numerous. But, as a rule, she is the only girl, and often the only child. As an only child she must have been an object of terrible anxiety to her parents. Every little ill and ailment will have been magnified by their fears. Family cares are divided when they are spread over a lot of children, but they are intensified when they are concentrated on a single child. Then the unfortunate girl is often brought up under a notion that is most debasing to a girl's mind, that she is to be prized, not for herself, her nature and culture, but for the property she is to possess. There are heiresses and heiresses. Many girls who have a great deal of money in reversion are quite poor until their parents depart, the said parents resembling that great character in history who declined to take off his clothes until it was bed-time. The heiress, in her consciousness of wealth, does not give full weight to the fact that her wealth is in prospect, not in possession. She is tormented with the idea that it is not herself but her gold that is being sought. Even years after she has been married, when her children are growing up and she and her husband are on most jog-trot familiar terms, this illusion will constantly crop up and perhaps paint imaginary scenes of pure unalloyed affection. Her parents will be still more anxious on her behalf. Too often they most resolutely and distinctly make up their minds that there must be a very full equivalent in cash or coin for any substance their daughter may possess. They too often forget that this substantial

equivalent may leave the heiress poor indeed in all that will make her truly happy, and satisfy the deepest wants of a woman's nature.

As a rule I take rather an unfavourable view of heiresses. Above all, the heiress who knows she is an heiress and presumes upon it is simply detestable. They are apt to have been spoilt in childhood. This gives a warp to their disposition, which is frequently disagreeably apparent in voice and disposition. Surely heiresses have been a good deal petted and coddled in the items of diet and exercise. They have frequently failed to have a full share of air and light, of bodily and intellectual exercise, and this has acted injuriously on their mental and physical development. In fact, I generally find—although one must always look at such general findings *cum grano*—that one has to abate or miss some excellence for every additional ten thousand pounds of fortune. If she has thirty thousand pounds she wears spectacles; if she has forty she squints in addition; if she has fifty thousand she is idiotic beside; if she has sixty she is illiterate, and so on. There is throughout the world a system of balances and compensations which often operates unpleasantly on the heiresses. I remember a man desperately hard up telling me that, after all, he thought he had the choice of three heiresses. One was an atheist, the next a fool, and the third no better than she should be. And even when the heiress is as nice as can be she is solitary or ill, and would willingly part with her banker's book for her bloom. These natural drawbacks, whatever their extent may be, diminish the heiress's chance of a good match. A man who is shy and proud and independent and rather poor, with all his moral and intellectual excellence, will often shrink from the society of wealthy women, and not subject himself to the chance of the imputation of mercenary motives. He is the man who least of all can bear or confront the insolence of prosperity. And while it is the tendency of good men to keep at a distance, it is naturally the tendency

of other men, notably those of the hawk and kite species, carefully and dexterously to watch the *habitat* of their heiress, and after all necessary preparation swoop on their devoted quarry.

For the heiress-hunter is an undoubted fact, frequently an unconscionable, repellent, selfish fact. There are men who fling themselves deliberately into this life-and-death game as utterly devoid of ruth and pity as may be. They go to work in a calm, calculated, and business-like point of view. It is a terrible thought that perhaps after all this is the very best way possible of making love. A man whose feelings are deeply and perhaps inextricably engaged will not play the great game of love-making with half the skill or success of the heiress-hunter. The fellow wants money, and wants it horribly. It may be said for him that he has never been trained for work, and cannot get it if he wanted it, and cannot set about it if he tried. If he has some ridiculously-small fixed income, he loaf about, and by an ingenious system of gold-beating spreads it over as large a surface as he can. If he has a little capital he probably prefers to make a dash, and rejects the Fabian policy for that of Marcellus. The first thing that an heiress-hunter does is to select his hunting-ground. Man, 'the mighty hunter,' always looks out for an appropriate hunting-ground. Man, when nomadic, not settled, hunting, not pastoral, lives on prey, which he seeks within limits as wide as possible. The Indian, whether by instinct or intuition, or summarising instantaneously the results of his experience, detects perhaps simply by the configuration of the country or the direction of the rivers the whole *fauna* and *flora* of a wide-spreading district. They know where the moose and the red deer and the rich-furred quadrupeds are to be sought. The expert heiress-hunter looks out for a shoal of heiresses, just as the fisherman looks out for a shoal of herrings. He intuitively rejects Bognor and Dawlish, Cromer and Bridge of Allan, as places which are to a very high degree unlikely. Bath and Chel-

tenham may offer their chances, Brighton and Torquay are not to be neglected; but perhaps he may arrive at the enlightened decision that the Yorkshire watering-places perhaps offer the best chances, such as Harrogate and Scarborough. The heiress-hunter proceeds methodically. He has his book, in which he enrols his calculation of the chances. He will not, like the celebrated bumpkin, request a speedy answer, inasmuch as he has another young lady in his eye, or resemble a young lady with whom we are acquainted who told Jones that she would accept him very shortly, provided Robinson did not make her an offer in the meantime. Nevertheless the principle on which he proceeds will be identical. He will have his list of heiresses. He will guard, so far as may be, against going on mere hearsay and probability, and will seek to obtain legal accuracy in all details of wealth, although in such cases a great deal will necessarily be left to probability. If he is a man of some tenderness and ruth he will take a smaller heiress with a prettier face and more graceful manners instead of a plainer, stupider, but more moneyed partner. But, as a rule, all such questions of sentiment are as entirely discarded as they would be in any legal or commercial transaction. The affair is a money affair, and must be governed by entirely prudential considerations. Every little accessory of the plot will be most carefully studied. It is a game in which you cannot afford to throw a point away. All matters of dress, which the lovelorn swain will often discard, but which are nevertheless, in the judgment of the best critics, of the highest importance, will receive careful attention. You may also rely upon it that no personal awkwardness or lack of conversational small talk will injuriously affect the heiress-hunter. Good and clever girls will easily forgive the negligence or stupidity which they can best explain by their own overwhelming influence. But I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that a large proportion of heiresses are neither good

nor clever. Then the hunter has often a very difficult game to play. He has sometimes a couple of heiresses in tow, whom he meets every day and almost every hour; and he has adroitly to contrive that the circumstance shall help him in his game rather than prove a hindrance. Some men are hardly equal to complicated operations, and therefore they confine themselves rigidly to the single object of their one chosen quarry. If they fail here they shift the venue, as the lawyers say, and move off rapidly into more favourable quarters. If they are in a great hurry they conduct their movements with startling rapidity; and sometimes they lend a zest to their work by betting very freely upon its results.

The great point with the heiress-hunter is to arrange matters as speedily as possible, and to commit the heiress as deeply as he can; he therefore presses on the business with a well-regulated ardour. If it is allowed to assume an unimpulsive and deliberate stage, the poor heiress-hunter is apt to come to much grief. At some critical moment, brothers interfere, or her family solicitor is desired to look into matters. The mention of settlements frequently proves ominous. The gentleman has no corresponding settlements to make. The lady's friends not unnaturally look upon him in the light of an impostor. Sometimes the affair is broken off altogether, not without some use of opprobrious language by an elder brother; sometimes the settlement is made strictly upon the lady and the children of the marriage. Often the lady takes a mercenary fit, and breaks it off herself; sometimes she takes a fit of enthusiastic self-abnegation, and insists on surrendering at discretion both herself and her property. Cases are even known where a gentleman has been contented to waive his claim for a pecuniary consideration from the friends. The case occasionally arises where each side has been deceived; where the heiress-hunter imagines that he has caught his heiress, and the penniless lady thinks that she has found a rich

husband. Mr. Dickens has worked out this instance in Alfred Lammle and his wife. Captain Marryat, in one of his stories, makes the parties separate as soon as they discover their error, and the lady commits the now fashionable crime of bigamy. One of the instances in which poetical justice is freely dealt out, is when the heiress-hunter falls deeply in love, and is then rejected for his mercenary conduct. The game of the feelings is a dangerous one, and our hero incurs this peril, though he minimises it, and when he falls a victim, it is ever as in the great scenes of plays, where the villain by mistake has exchanged the poisoned rapier, or drank of the poisoned cup.

It strikes me that I have been a little hard on the heiresses, and even, though assuredly not undeservedly, on the heiress-hunter. Beyond all comparison, some of the best and brightest women I have known have been heiresses—but with an important qualification. They are heiresses who have never been married. They have been clever enough to avoid all the arts and crafts of the heiress-hunter. Perhaps they have been a great deal too clever. They have been so anxious to escape a simulated affection that they have lost a true. They have imputed, or have been persuaded to impute motives, where none existed. In early life they have allowed themselves to be governed too much by 'a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart.' They have never allowed themselves to fall in love with the tutor, after the magnificent precedents of the Shirley of Charlotte Brontë, and the Lady Geraldine of Mrs. Browning. Perhaps they have so awed good men by their riches that they have never had the chance of mating with an equal mind, and any other chance they have righteously despised. I think myself that the old maids are at least as good as the matrons, and the heiresses are the pleasantest variety of old maids. You see they are old maids by their own free will. They have not married for the mere sake of getting settled,

as is the case with so many women. Their sweetness is not of that acidulated kind which is the generic flavour of spinsters. Frequently they have a singularly wide and generous range of sympathies. To give and to forgive seems the very air they draw. They have more culture than most women have, the result of larger means and greater leisure, and very frequently they are fond of friends and of society, largely indulging elevated tastes. They will give you sympathy, appreciation, allowance, when perhaps none others will; and every clergyman knows where the stream of bounty will run amplest and least stained by selfish motives. Now and then you hear that such a one has married. People lift up their eyes and their hands. It almost seems as if nature were avenging a life of common-sense by an act of tremendous absurdity. But I don't see why they should not. An immortal spirit never grows old. I know a brilliant old lady of seventy who is younger in heart and mind than most girls of seventeen. When Louis XIV. asked a very old woman at what age women ceased to love, he was told that he must ask some one older than herself. Of one thing you may be quite sure—that this sort of heiress never marries a heiress-hunter.

But there is a very important distinction that requires to be drawn. There is a confusion of thought about heiress-hunting which requires to be cleared up. Your heiress-hunters are not generally drawn from the class of poor men. Of course there are the younger son, and the soldier of fortune, and the parson, and the adventurer, all of whom, in the opinion of parents and guardians, may be as hungry pike and jack lying in wait for the innocent young gudgeon. But it is quite possible that even these objects of terror may be true men, and even true lovers, and that the real fortune-hunter may come under such a guise of respectability that he is not even suspected. As a rule, young men will be young men, and not think overmuch of that matter of money in a wife. If

the case were otherwise, there would be a tremendous rush towards girls with money; and this tremendous rush does not, as a matter of fact, exist. The heiress receives perhaps more offers, but perhaps she attracts less love. After all, the love of love is a much commoner and a much stronger feeling than the love of money. Many a young man who, with the mock worldly wisdom of the young, has laid down a mercenary system for himself, brilliantly falsifies it by marrying his sister's governess or his aunt's companion. He goes into the future in the spirit of adventure. He can draw to any extent on that large, illimitable bank of hope. He has no actual experience of the great practical difficulty of keeping up house and home. It is this inexperience and unwisdom that go so far in justifying French parents in arranging marriages for their children, and vindicates the remark that, if marriages were left to the Lord Chancellor or some other authority, there would be more happy marriages than there are now. As an ordinary rule, the blind youth obeys the blind natural law of falling in love, and then goes in steadily for the Darwinian struggle for existence. If he does not do this, but, on the contrary, sacrifices the emotions of youth for miserly thoughts, he has, depend upon it, the strong element of the Jonas Chuzzlewit or the Barnes Newcome in him. The young man who looks out resolutely for money has probably got plenty of his own. He has probably sown all his wild oats, and so is better able to take a 'commercial' view of the 'transaction.' He is perfectly able to marry a young girl on her merits; and even now, with his debased feelings and selfish experience, it would be happy for him if he could do so. But money is the great merit sought. He is not oblivious of other merits, can take a rational estimate of good looks, good education, and good connections; but most of all he has the greatest notion of adding house to house, land to land, money to money. And if this is really the governing motive, no amount of fortune of his own will exempt him from the imputa-

tion of being a fortune-hunter. And the heiress, captured and hunted, will have to undergo whatever inconvenience or unhappiness that may belong to such processes. The most grievous fault in heiress-hunting is that it simulates affection, and only gives the deceived heiress the shadow and affectation of it. And it is sad to think what that poor ill-fated woman has to undergo. It is just possible that her case may turn out better than we think for. The heiress-hunter may begin with money, but may end with love, on the principle of the fool who came to mock and remained to pray. And as the home-nest is built up, and children come, and many mutual interests arise, love may be strong as a rock at last. But this is not the ordinary way in which men's characters work towards their destinies. There can be nothing more torturing than for a young wife to discover that her husband has only married her for her money, and probably does not scruple to tell her so, in moments of ill temper. She finds out, perhaps, that he is sordid, ignorant, hard, selfish, unloving. If she is a good woman, her fate is little less than martyrdom. All the flowers of life wither at her touch, like those of poor Sybel in Marguerite's garden. Then sets in the mighty famine of the heart. Then the very beauty of the outward world becomes almost heart-breaking. You may tell her to rally; but the dove with a broken pinion cannot soar. I am supposing that she is a good woman; but if she has little strength of principle, hers may be a fate heavier than any earthly sufferings.

If a man makes up his mind deliberately that he will marry for money, and clings to this aim with downright tenacity of purpose, I see no reason why he should not succeed in his object. I think we may justifiably indulge in a great deal of moral indignation against the heiress-hunter. But when we come to classify and define, we see that there are large allowances to be made, and that in many cases the reproach has virtually to be wiped away. There are men in the

world who say, honestly enough, that they will only marry when they love, and yet that they can only love where there is money. Such men often find that their stars forbid the desired conjunction of love and money; that they must sacrifice the one or the other, or perhaps make a feeble compromise by accepting a little of each. It is impossible not to feel sympathy with such men. The poor curate, who can never be anything else than a poor curate; the half-pay officer, the younger son with a narrow, fixed limited income; the lay fellow of a college, who has never succeeded in opening up any career in life for himself—these men, if they are to be married at all, must marry those who are large or small heiresses in their way. And if there is genuine love in the case, I do not see that the heiress has done badly for herself who has married a poor gentleman. The great doctrine which Mr. Trollope persistently preaches—a sort of gospel, in its way, which he untiringly reiterates in all his stories—is, that you must marry for money, and you must not marry for anything else. To this school it cannot but be that Mr. Trollope's writings have done good by their inculcation of a wholesome moral. Take the case of fellows of colleges. Under the old regulations, they lost their income as soon as they married; under the new regulations, they may marry and retain their fellowships for twelve years, and then they lose them. Under either regulation, a marriage in many cases must be a marriage for money. Then again, there are men who candidly say that they must have money; perhaps they will even tell women so, or at least imply it, and the women will not be offended, at least under such circumstances as those which I have just mentioned. A case arises of heiress-hunting in a very modified form, which is perhaps not so uncommon. A man finds that he can no longer hope to marry for love, and so he thinks that he will marry for money. He would have married for love once, and would have desired nothing better. But the love was lost to him. Per-

haps she died, perhaps she discarded him, perhaps the love-suit was denied. There is many a dull, prosaic individual who could give you, from his own experience, all the plot of an imaginative romance. But because that bright dream is not for him, he does not therefore think, 'despite the warnings and anathemas of Mr. Trollope, that he is called upon to abstain from getting married. And marrying, from what he allows to be secondary motives, recognizing that marriage will not be a great spiritual power, but a worldly transaction, he determines that money shall form one of those secondary motives. But there is this difference between him and the heiress-hunter, that, with our friend, money only counts for one of various influences. He would not sacrifice womanliness, goodness, culture, for any amount of it. He has his income—or at all events, is able and willing to work for it; and is not, like the heiress-hunter, aspiring to be merely 'kept' by the woman he makes his wife. And perhaps there are good lines in store for these men. The heart, like its enshrouding form, is fearfully and wonderfully made. There is a deep spring gushing beneath the rocks, and flowers and shadows even in the desert. Insensibly the solitary is set in families; the solitary place is glad; though the golden summer of the year is gone, a later summer sets in, not unlike, and there is a solemn tenderness that more than consoles for early dreams.

But the happiest kind of heiress-hunting, after all, is when a man has honestly sought and won a girl's love, and makes the discovery,

and not till then, that she is an heiress. I remember the aspiration of David Copperfield when he became enamoured of the eldest Miss Larkins. He imagined the paternal Larkins coming to him and saying: 'Youth is no objection. Here are twenty thousand pounds. Be happy.' I have known instances where a hardly less juvenile Copperfield has had such aspirations granted, and has, by a single happy flirtation of festive summer days, won lands and riches such as are rarely conceded to a long life of industry. And very pleasant it must be for an honest lover to have it laboriously explained to him how much property his wife will have, and be consulted about the disposition of it. He will not think much of the money part of his prize at present; but he will none the less feel the comfort of it one of these days. But there is, perhaps, even a happier way of obtaining a fortune through a wife: when the tried good wife unexpectedly inherits one, after long years of marriage life. She will hasten, with overflowing heart, to pour it all into the slender coffers of the husband, thankful that it was not hers at a time when her untried nature might have caused her, on its account, to lose the treasures of his love, and glad to give this evidence of wifely devotion. This kind of event is not so very uncommon in real life; and I think it is well worth the attention of the describers of contemporary manners, as indicating that happiest kind of transmutation, beyond any elixir, of changing common metal to gold, of transmuting gold itself into the currency of the 'Spiritual City.'



PARISINE.

ONE Monday morning, not long ago, I took up the 'Constitutionnel' (Paris newspaper) for the sake of Nestor Roqueplan's theatrical *feuilleton*, or weekly comment on theatrical events. There it was in its place as usual, occupying the ground-floor of two whole pages, well-informed, sharp, yet fair and good-natured. A few hours afterwards another newspaper announced that Nestor Roqueplan was dead! 'Impossible it can be the writer,' I said. 'It is a father, cousin, uncle, or nephew. There are probably more Nestor Roqueplans than one. The event certainly took place at the Théâtre du Châtelet, of which the true Nestor was then the manager; but the deceased namesake may have been staying with him at the time. The hand that wrote those amusing sentences about what took place only a day or two since cannot now be cold and rigid!'

It was so, nevertheless. The proof of that article had been corrected by its writer only a few hours before death made it the last. An ailing heart, which had for some time threatened mischief, brought about, as usual, a sudden catastrophe. The witty tongue was silent; the fluent pen was still.

Nestor Roqueplan, though born in the south, spent his life as a veritable Parisian, and few men would be more missed from Paris than he. He died unmarried, in his sixty-fifth year; but he was one of those men who refuse to grow old at all in mind, and as little as possible in person. The latter effort cost, of course, a considerable amount of 'making-up.' It is not my intention even to sketch his biography, which may be imagined as that of a single man about town, a popular contributor to periodical literature, and successively manager of several of the Paris theatres, including the Grand Opera. The memoirs of such a personage might be made to fill volumes of amusing gossip. I will merely mention that, like the late Duke of Wellington,

he was the author of many expressions and sayings, which he let fall apparently unconscious of their aptness, but which were immediately adopted into the popular vocabulary. For instance, he gave the name of *lorettes* to certain women who showed a predilection for the parish of Notre Dame de Lorette; he also fitted with the title of *petits crevés* the Parisian representatives (only more effete) of the Dundreary type. My object is to direct the reader's attention to the book in which he concentrated his whole individuality. He himself was the essence of Paris; the book is the essence of himself. Its title is explained in the briefest of prefaces. 'People say: Strychnine, Quinine, Nicotine, Aniline. I say: Parisine.'

'NESTOR ROQUEPLAN.'

What follows is a sample of the Lutetian elixir.

Next to the fact of having actually been born—the indispensable first step in human existence, without which no others are possible—marriage is perhaps the most important event of human life. Now marriage, as it exists in French society, is assuredly one of the institutions with which chance has the most to do. In Germany, England, and the United States, there is more opportunity for individual choice. Marriageable girls know nothing there of the French system of sequestration. They enjoy a liberty by which they largely profit to know and to be known. Engagements—the prefaces to marriage—not being a series of empty official conversations under the surveillance of parents and guardians, have a reality and an earnestness which render social mistakes somewhat difficult. And as if those preliminaries were insufficient, marriage there is not absolutely indissoluble.

We may add that marriages in France are either rash or interested. Their neighbours act at the same time more cautiously and more generously. They think more of the face and of the disposition than

of the portion; and if neither of the parties can contribute more than empty purses, they renounce or they adjourn their union. The man has greater reliance on himself, and cheerfully reckons on his own unaided resources: he wants a companion for life, and not a partner in business; a wife, and not a Co. in his concerns.

Marriage, in Parisian society, is simply an affair whose conditions are bargained for in an undertone, amidst the bustle and roar of the great metropolis. To unite, through the agency of a notary and a priest, the existence of a young lady with sharp-pointed heels to the existence of a young man with hair parted down the middle, seems easy enough; but in reality, for every family, and especially at present, now that the old social classifications are completely upset, the question of marriage is sombre as the unknown future. Do the fortunes which spring up so rapidly and so magically add no column of cares to the account-books of those whose children grow taller while their capital swells? If you were an upstart of yesterday yourself, would you give your daughter to a budding young upstart? Certainly not. You are too well aware of the danger of the means employed for starting up. People who have recently made large fortunes are fonder than ever of hunting out, for their daughter's husband, some noble scion of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, impoverished by cards and courtesans. A grand name on one side; great wealth on the other. These alliances of interest and vanity bring about ridiculous complications, which cannot be shaken off till the third generation.

An ambitious financier, of vulgar manners, gave his daughter to a worthy man of lofty parentage. Although irreproachable in his conduct towards the lady, he could not conquer the prejudices of his own private circle. Sometimes, on returning from a grand family dinner, the father-in-law would confide his sorrows to his wife. She, strong, stout, and well stocked with resignation, would answer, 'So long as

we are not sent to dine in the pantry, we mustn't complain.'

The do-nothing nobility of France—they cannot be called the aristocracy, because they enjoy no *cracy* whatever—are preparing for themselves a future which is anything but rose-coloured. While the English aristocracy strives to earn its privileges by its laborious activity, its high education, by the part it takes in public and private affairs, never ceasing to belong to the English people, not a few French 'gentile-hommes'* (ignorant as the carp at Fontainebleau, who still fancy themselves living in the reign of François I., gamblers and dissolute out of vanity rather than inclination) strive hard to increase the general wealth of the nation with the remnants of their inheritance, already cut up by the Civil Code.

Restaurateurs, carriage-builders, and insatiable women, are the agents by whom this democratic decomposition of great families is effected. And as the king of France is no longer there to prop up tumbling houses; as the present laws of inheritance, with their system of infinite division, reduce illustrious names to incomes of fifty pounds a year; as misfortunes and losses are never repaired by labour, and as bourgeois will then invariably marry bourgeois, the hidalgos will have to refrain from marriage, for fear of engendering a race of beggars.

But besides persons of really noble birth—and French nobility, like French property, is subject to the law of infinite division—there are brummagem, pinchbeck, self-made nobles, who are not to be put down by the ridicule they excite.

Given a Monsieur whose name is Mâchelard, and who is very much disgusted with his name; the first temptation to ennoble himself is excited by street lads who address him with pompous titles when they open his carriage-door. The longing is kept alive by his tailor, who sends in his bill to M. de Mâchelard. Horsedealers and carriage-builders make the malady chronic. It is

* The word has a different meaning to our 'gentleman.' It implies that a person is of noble birth.

impossible to buy a horse and trap in the Champs Elysées without being treated as a Count. Then the servants come to take the orders of M. le Comte; the porters hand the letters and cards to M. le Comte. Then follows the purchase of half a dozen cottages in a village, say Floricourt, thirty or forty miles away from town, whose name he usurps, with the complicity of the peasants, who dub him with the title in order to earn double wages. The thing is done in a couple of years. By that time M. Machelard really believes himself to be the Comte de Floricourt. He avoids misalliances, and his children are insolent.

Without the links of family life, society holds together but loosely. Consequently, fashion, which meddles with everything, will never succeed in making large families ridiculous. What is a household where there are no children? It is a tête-à-tête in perpetuity, embittered by reproaches which are never expressed in words, for want of knowing whose the fault is; it is the haughty sarcasms of mothers of families irritating the childless wife, but sparing the husband; it is wealth unavailingly possessed, or leaking out into illicit channels; it is the certainty of meeting the last hour in solitude, or in the presence of heirs who measure their demonstrations of attachment by the importance of their share. A house without children is more melancholy than a house which has lost its children; because that at least treasures up a portrait, a lock of hair, a broken toy—souvenirs of joys and sorrows experienced in common. It has at least a tomb to which it can carry its tribute of flowers, and think of the past.

On the other hand, the living flock of brats are the amusement and the tyrants of the whole establishment. There is a competition as to who shall oppose the least resistance to the little despots, who, from the very first, try their strength—that is, their tears—in the subjugation of their nurses and mammas. The mother imagines the most elegant fal-lals to welcome the pretty

squallers on their entrance into the world; subsequently she will dress them as little Scotchmen, little Cosacks, as Scapins, Crispins, until, costumed with the schoolboy's tunic, they never lace their shoes, catch perennial colds in the head without troubling themselves about pocket-handkerchiefs, and make albums of postage-stamps. As to the father, the advent of the prodigy fills him with pride—and enables him to vary his evening amusements. He takes to it so kindly—he is delighted to be so fatherly and free, that he does his best to be as fatherly and free as possible.

Philosophers have observed, in every 'cercle' or club, that as soon as wives have fairly entered on their first *grossesse*, the husbands return to their nightly whist. What is called the *plongeon*, the dip or diving, that is, the disappearance of a new-married man, does not exceed six months on an average. Two preparatory months, for paying his court, and four months of decent and proper *convenances* after the wedding. After that he resumes all his bachelor habits, and his wife begins to complain with bitterness 'that there is no getting him away from his club.' From that date also, the most moderate whist may possibly become a dangerous game. It is no longer a house without children, but a house without a husband.

As the child grows, he becomes more and more frisky—and more and more inquisitive. It is a mistake not to be reserved in the presence of children; ordinarily, people speak and act (especially servants) as if they were not there. Before they can talk, we fancy them blind and deaf; when they talk, we believe them incapable of understanding; when they undoubtedly do understand, we take them to be inattentive or indifferent. A sensible woman said on this subject, 'I have always feared and respected my children from the time when they were five minutes old.' Children, in fact, resemble people who understand a language without being able to speak it. They see, hear, and comprehend with such

extraordinary quickness and precocity, that their parents regard them as marvels of intelligence, which they really are in the first days of childhood.

In their manifestations of family affections, the parents mostly act in this wise: the father manifests for his daughter an attachment which the mother more especially bestows on her son. Both of them obey a law which is at once mysterious and reasonable. The father falls into the habit of directing his faculties, his force, his fortune, to the side on which lie danger, weakness, and the absence of means of acquiring wealth. The mother, through an unconscious return of coquetry, is delighted to indulge in a second love. She loves her husband twice by loving her son, in whom his father resumes a hopeful existence. One of a mother's most delightful emotions is experienced the day when her son first puts on breeches. He is a little man!

With a mother devoted to her duties and to the future prospects of her children, the desire of finding as soon as possible a second protector, a champion, a name, produces a blindness which is complete. At every one of the stages passed by this creature whom we have been ourselves, whom we love when we have him, and whom we call 'the dear boy,' her blindness augments. As soon as the age of lace, and ribbons, and feathers is past, the infant suddenly grows ugly and continues so without intermission for fifteen years. School deforms and bleaches him. He is grotesque in his tunic and leather girdle. His feet and his face are always untidy. Poor mamma considers him charming.

At his first pipe, soon after the age of twelve, she gives him a good scolding, promising, however, not to tell papa. 'Pipes are horrid. If it was only a cigar, why—Here; there's some money to buy cigars, like most of your other schoolfellows.'

At the first manifestation of down on his lip, mamma runs to papa, and says, 'Haven't you noticed it? Alfred has got a moustache!'

'He's a beauty, your son; and his moustache is a beauty. I'd much rather he had got a prize or two.'

When domestic rumours—sometimes the lad's boastful talk—inform the lady that he has set his first step in gallantry, again she hurries to papa, and whispers, 'Don't you know it? Alfred has a sweetheart; he's in love. No wonder; such a good-looking young man!'

Daddy knits his brows and growls, 'He'll spend all his money about some hussey.'—

'Money! He has got no money! You ought to allow him pocket-money.'

'In my time we had nothing of the kind, and nevertheless——'

Whether papa gives it or not, Alfred is sure to have money. The mother relishes the supreme delight of giving the spoiled child money *without his father's knowledge*.

Ever fond, ever indulgent, resigned to see her son stretch his wings, provided she can tie a string to his leg, mamma does not like him to take his flight to unknown worlds whence he might be a long while before returning. She prefers his remaining within the sphere of *her world*.

Morality and civilisation agree in imposing legitimate unions as a social duty. But a man is not necessarily a rebel and egoist because he refrains from fulfilling that duty, any more than those who do accomplish it are without exception models of self-denial, fidelity, and disinterestedness.

Besides marriages of reparation, what motives usually determine the majority of other marriages? Some people marry without knowing why. A certain number have been heard to say, 'In our family, we marry from father to son, and I do the same.' A valid reason, certainly; and if things do not turn out well, if they are wretched in their quality of husbands, they make up for it in their quality of lovers, as writes the author of the 'Persian Letters.' Others know perfectly well why they marry—namely, to finger a dowry and

acquire a position. Certain country noodles fancy they constitute a race, and would not like their name to die out. We must not forget marriages of inclination; they are the most natural and the most moral, but not always the happiest.

Why do people *not* get married? Often through indolence; often through fear of responsibilities—which is not a blamable sentiment. There are bachelors of feeble health and weakly constitution, whose conscience revolts from entailing on their children the inheritance of a morbid principle. Others, arrived at the dull days of life, at the days when men cease to build up projects, hold it immoral as well as imprudent to amuse their old age with a tribe of youngsters whose education and establishment they can never direct. Better to buy kittens, as Chateaubriand did, and renew them when they get grave and sulky.

Bachelors are not selfish, because they deprive themselves of family pleasures. You might as well call a young man a coward, because he rejoices at having drawn a good number at the conscription. The bachelor is a courageous man, for he tranquilly looks his last hour in the face. He does not paint a fancy picture of his dying bed surrounded by three sorrowing generations—whose 'expectations' he is realising by his decease. He knows full well that his last drop of drink will be handed to him by his man-servant. The controversy between a single and a married life might be enlivened or saddened to any extent, for it comprises the whole history of humanity. A confirmed old bachelor declared that celibacy and marriage, in a moral and theoretical point of view, were equally open to attack and defence; that practically, marriage is an excellent thing in provincial towns, in the country, and in Switzerland. In Paris, there is only one good social position—that of a widower (rich, of course). The Parisiennes take men at a general valuation, comprising in their estimate the manners, the social position, and the fortune. Paris, happy city for célibataires;

true paradise of men in good preservation! But, ye well got-up, well-preserved men, never venture into Italy or Spain. In the land of the guitar and the mandoline, you will be looked upon as a set of mummies. Nobody, in those barbarous regions, has the right to be eight-and-forty. Twenty or thirty, at the outside, is the utmost limit.

Men, now-a-days, do not avoid the ladies; they neglect them. Is it the fault of the ladies? Perhaps a little. Perhaps they count too frequently, in the life of a man, either for everything or for nothing at all. What a lesson they might learn if they had the opportunity of observing how men contrive to pass long evenings stolen from the household, the family, and even from gallantry! How surprised they would be to find that nothing is more simple, and that men by themselves are often better behaved than when they are in ladies' society!

This scission of the two sexes in Paris is the work of the cigar and of *chic*. The cigar has become so preponderant, that women have given way to it, although with a bad grace, certainly. They have their revenge, indirectly, by complimenting some perfumed Adonis with, 'You are always welcome here. You never smoke!' Or they send the culprits into a chilly little den, which they call the 'fumoir' or smoking room. The culprits go there after dinner, but don't expect to see them back during the rest of the evening. Ladies, you are turned adrift! A few women of excessive liberality have consented to smoke a little themselves. But there is no treating with the smoker. He wants to smoke at all times and places, while playing cards, dancing, and even at meals. The Cercles have received the smokers, who are not to be coaxed back by ungracious concessions. It is too late. The time is past.

Chic, which is the love of notoriety, urges the Parisian youth to indulge in astounding freaks. A horse and a celebrated and expensive mistress—that's *chic*. To sigh, write love letters, make music, and turn spoony, all that is nothing but

serenading, contemptible in the eyes of *chicky* men. The word *chic* is ugly and badly connected. The words of its family generally express nothing but disagreeable, vulgar, repugnant, or ridiculous things. Thus, *chique* is a quid, the lump of tobacco which makes you fancy the quidder has caught a very bad swelled face. Apropos to which, as the French have adopted many of our popular expressions—'All right!' for instance—it is not impossible that *chic* may owe its origin to the English 'cheeky.' Whatever, however, its derivation, it is an untraceful but necessary monosyllable.

Chic is not to be defined. It manifests itself in a variety of ways.

How many times does the word 'grâce' occur in Isabelle's air in the fourth act of 'Robert the Devil?' Well, it occurs only two-and-thirty times. How many times the word *chic* will occur in this dissertation, we cannot yet guess; but as the total will be considerable, we cease to italicise it: and it is impossible to express it by a periphrasis.

Take a chic child. The chic child wears a Scotch dress. His smart man-servant conducts him to the Tuileries gardens, carrying his young master's balloon and hoop, and makes him join some group of rich and well-curved children. The mother, on her way to the Bois de Boulogne, bestows a glance upon her darling's recreations. The father, when he leaves the Bourse, sometimes also comes to see how young Hopeful is amusing himself.

By-and-by, the chic child is led by a tutor, as a day-scholar, to the most chic Lycée in Paris—namely, the Lycée Bonaparte. No uniform, no blue cotton stockings for this love of a boy, but elegant jackets, silken neck-shawls, pretty bottines, and half-franc cigars. On Sundays and Thursdays (holidays) he rides a pony (necessarily Shetland or Welsh). Next day he talks of it to his schoolfellows, choosing poor Lycéens for his auditors.

His studies finished, his eye-glass fixed in place, and his first visit paid to a demoiselle engaged at the Bouffes-Parisiens, papa begins to grumble.

'I dare say,' says the son to himself. 'We'll see about that. You had better take good care of your cash-box. My head is full of chic, and chic I'll have.'

'Work,' says the father.

'Work at what? At morality? That's a little out of date, papa. You shouldn't have dressed me as a Highlander when I was little.'

Henceforth young Hopeful's situation in the world consists in impatiently awaiting papa's departure.

Chic insinuates itself, with the pertinacity of ivy, into all the interstices of life and society. Your tradesmen are chic, or they are not. Tailors, dressmakers, and boot-makers who have shops, are not reputed chic; they are all very well to supply the wants of passing strangers, visitors without luggage, and travelling Americans. There are houses which are chic, without appreciable reason. They have no apparent recommendation beyond the eagerness of those who throng to them in crowds; neither the birth, nor the connections, nor the talents (never chic), nor the beauty of the mistress of the house, nor the excellence of the cookery, nor the quality of the wines, but almost always the fortune.

Money is always chic.

Certain towns may be chic. Rouen, Lyons, and Marseilles are large and interesting cities. Bordeaux is chic. There has been much talk about hats of late, especially since the English importation of hats with rather low crowns. Such hats are chic. To pick up curiosities and pictures wherever you can find them good, attests nothing but your discernment, artistic knowledge, and taste. To buy the same things at a public auction, is chic. You bid against Lord H. What chic! There are chic Cercles; or rather, there is only one, the Jockey Club. Why? Nobody can tell. Other Cercles are just as select, as exclusive, as well constituted, but not so chic. A journal announced, not long ago, that a ball had been given by M. * *, Member of the Jockey Club; which is just as strange as if it had said, M. * *, Subscriber to the Opera, gave a grand dinner. But the Jockey

Club is so extremely chic, that many people consider the fact of belonging to it not as an ordinary circumstance, but as a dignity.

To arrive late at a house where you are asked to dinner (which in reality is merely insolent) is very chic.

What is never chic, is to fall really in love.

Two questions, often discussed in small establishments, demonstrate how tightly stretched at the present day are the relations between masters and servants. The first is the question of the liquor-stand. The French liquor-stand is a fetish, a household idol, in French families with moderate means. It is a tabernacle, a sacred shrine, whose mystic key is invariably carried by the mistress of the house about her person. At the close of every dinner she gives, the *bonne*, usually a maid of all work, deposits on the table the treasured box whose inconvenient mechanism is sure to bring about some ridiculous episode.

The keyhole refuses to admit the key.

'What a bungle you are making of it!' exclaims Monsieur politely.

Madame retorts, 'Open it yourself then, since you are so clever.'

'Not I,' replies Monsieur. 'I give it up. It wasn't properly wiped. The joints are glued together with curacao.'

It is opened at last. Not a single glass is clean. Nota bene, that in small establishments the liquor glasses were never known to be clean; in the first place because those glasses are elaborately cut; the multiplicity of their facettes and angles multiplies the receptacles for dirt; secondly—and reason supreme!—Madame never allowing her liquor-stand, her sacred box, to quit her sight, scarcely waits for the last liqueur to lick out his last drop of anisette before she replaces, with her own fair fingers, her cut-glass bottles and her cut-glass glasses in the complicated chest whose folding shutters open and close like those of a diptych altar-piece. Then, securing it with the key, she says to her maid, 'Take that away. We will clean the *cristaux* to-morrow.' To-morrow

ever remains to-morrow. The 'crystals' are never cleaned; whence the multiple deposit of curacao at the bottom of every liqueur glass.

The bottoms of bottles raise another grand question which causes many an anxious thought to vigilant, economical masters who, as servants say, look out sharp 'to see that nobody pays twice.' In English houses, the difficulty is in great measure avoided by the prohibition of black bottles at table, and by presenting wine thereat in decanters which are locked up in sideboards when the repast is over. French servants have a variety of devices for appropriating their masters' wine, and so procuring a supplement to the number of bottles stipulated in the terms of their agreement. They don't care to drink the wine called *vin des maîtres*, company wine, but greatly prefer the *vin pour les gens*, servants' wine, because it is rough and 'scratches' their palate. The other, according to their notions, is mere lap for invalids, with no support in it.

Every time a descent is made to the cellar to fill a basket, whether by a 'confidential' servant or by the master himself armed with a candlestick, a key, and an absurdly knowing and distrustful countenance, the feat is performed, if only for the fun of playing Monsieur a trick. When they are suspected and accused, when a certain number of bottles are missing, servants instantly answer, with perfect sincerity, 'Monsieur is well aware that I don't like his wine, and that I prefer the *vin de propriétaire* wine supplied by the grower, which I get at the grocer's.' If it is white wine which has been so conveyed, it is the cook who takes the burden on her shoulders. She has used every drop of it for her sauces.

'You are a wasteful hussey. It is shocking, horrible, unheard-of, to stew kidneys in l'Yquem of '48.'

'In lichen! In medicine! Who could ever guess it was that? However on earth should I know it was lichen? Ma foi, it is a thousand pities. I said my sauce had a queer sort of taste. Give me the petit Chablis of the wine-shops.'

It is quite true that, for her own cheek, cookey prefers the brandied petit Chablis served at the pot-house. The same is the case with restaurants' waiters, who care nothing for the delicate liquids left on the table after the choicest dinner, and who really enjoy only the *petit bleu* sold by the quart over the neighbouring counter — and always because it *gratte* or scratches.

Wine and liqueurs are the articles most subject to what is called, in a household, *coulage* or leakage. In what are styled by servants *grandes maisons*, wine disappears by whole swoops at a time; in those which they stigmatise as *baraques*, stalls or sheds, the leakage takes the shape of ends of bottles.

'Pierre, it strikes me that there ought to be some of yesterday's Bordeaux wine remaining.'

'Madame, I did not dare set it before Madame; there was nothing but a muddy remnant. If Madame wishes for it, here it is.'

At which, Pierre brings a bottle whose conical bottom stands up like a rock left dry by the tide. Pierre is the author of the ebb. When removing it from table, nicely calculating the inclination requisite from the quantity of liquid left, he applied the neck of the bottle to his mouth, and took his dose of the precious Château Latour. This horrible partnership is customary. The only way of escaping it is to renounce all right to the remnants of bottles.

In respect to Cognac and liqueurs, is it possible to allow the disappearance of bottles from which so small a quantity has been removed? Certainly not. In that case we may employ a method adopted by a master, name not mentioned, but probably M. Roqueplan himself.

He said to his servant—always the same Pierre—'Pierre! This Cognac is admirably good. I should consider you particularly stupid if you did not try to have a taste of it; and I should be still more stupid if I

gave you the chance of doing so. If you robbed me in cleanly style, by carefully pouring out a glass now and then, we might come to an understanding; but as your great delight in this matter is to stick the neck of the bottle into your mouth, I will seal my bottle after every time of using it with this ring, which never leaves me. But, as this precaution might hurt your feelings, when the bottle is coming to a close, I will make up for it by giving you the last glass.'

Pierre, accepting the compromise, carefully watched his master's consumption, and never failed at the right moment to say, 'Monsieur, don't take any more; the rest belongs to me.'

In the eyes of certain people such a dialogue and such a bargain might seem to savour too much of familiarity.

It is only small folk and ill-natured folk who are not a trifle familiar with their domestics. The whole repertory of the old French comedy attests that the grand seigneurs were not haughty with the people who live our lives, whom we associate with our pleasures, our passions, and our poultries; whom we send to our sweethearts, our apothecaries, and our attorneys, insisting on a secrecy which they sometimes observe. A man who is thoroughly conscious of being 'un homme comme il faut,' is not afraid of any familiarity. It is a mistaken imitation of English manners which has introduced to France this hauteur towards people who wait on you. The difference of character between the two nations would suffice to explain the difference of their relations between master and servant. By relinquishing her old habits and customs, France has lost her old race of servants, who, with their sincere attachment and their human weaknesses, are still to be found in a few country families.



SKETCHES AND EPISODES OF THE LONDON SEASON.

II. AT THE ACADEMY.

THE social history of the London streets is a book which, notwithstanding the amount of continuous employment given by the various metropolitan localities to the industrious gentlemen who compile handbooks of curious antiquities, and manuals of forgotten places, still remains to be written. The vicissitudes through which many a score of the thoroughfares of the capital have passed are all unknown to the casual loungeur of to-day. The rise, zenith, and fall of Bloomsbury would introduce us to many objects of greater interest than bricks and mortar. If the mansions in the streets that abut upon what is now the Thames Embankment possessed any autobiographical capacity we should have a whole series of infinitely amusing chapters on the caprice of fashion, and the manner in which neighbourhoods once popular and famous commence their decline and consummate their failure. What material the sociologist might find for the construction of new theories of progress, what light might be let in upon the views of the philosophers of the world, it is impossible to say. Should some such treatise as that of whose suggestion we make a present, free, gratis, and for nothing, in all sincerity and good will, to Mr. Timbs or to any one of his followers and friends who may consider its adoption worth their while, ever be essayed, from the point of view and in the manner which we desiderate, Bond Street will fill in it no small space. But Bond Street will be cited as an instance not of mutability of whim on the part of mankind, but of constancy. Bond Street is exactly to-day what it was half a century ago—the chosen thoroughfare of fashion, and the favoured resort of well-appointed equipages and aristocratic loungeurs. The attempt has been made before now to deprive Bond Street of some portion of its traditional prestige, and to

effect a transference of it to the Street of the Regent. The idea was studiously disseminated that the glories of Bond were fast departing. A few years more, and it would be on a par, as far as regarded the vivacity of its scene, with the thoroughfares of Wimpole or Wigmore, the indisputably select, but indisputably dull. The tide of fashion had set irrevocably in the direction of the stuccoed houses of the Quadrant. The presiding deities of Bond Street had, it was confidently asserted, uttered, in tones that admitted of no doubt, the words 'Let us depart.' But the syllables of evil omen were spoken to no purpose. Bond Street remained in the possession of its pristine glories, as it remains now, and, one may be bold to say, will remain. There is an air of elegance and refined splendour about the thoroughfare which is unrivalled. Certain streets remind one of the vulgar ostentation and the tawdry show of the *nouveaux riches*. To these Bond Street stands in the same relation that the head of an aboriginal county family does to the self-made man of Manchester or Birmingham. At all times, night or morning, in the glare of the noon-day sun, or beneath the slanting of his afternoon rays, Bond Street never forgets itself; it is always well bred—the paragon and the queen of the fashionable thoroughfares of London.

Yes, we confess to a decided partiality for Bond Street; and in the season it is as good a place for the loungeur and social sketcher as the Row, the Horticultural, or the Clubs. The removal of the Academicians to Burlington House has given it a fresh stimulus; and the result is, that it is more crowded, more prosperous, and more fashionable than ever. Long live Bond Street! say we. But the Academy? Yes, we had forgotten; it was the Academy which we had intended to describe. Not the pictures, certainly not, but

the spectators. *Excudent alii spirantibus æra*; by which we mean to intimate that we have not the slightest wish to trench upon the legitimate occupation of the professional art-critic—a gentleman to whom, at this season of the year, society is assuredly under the deepest debt of gratitude. 'Have you been to the Academy?' The question is somewhat musty; and by the unaided assistance of their own powers a majority of persons would probably find a difficulty in getting beyond a monosyllabic reply, or, at best, a monosyllable dissolved into polysyllables. It is the function of the art-critic to provide a public uninitiated into art mysteries with ideas on a subject of which they know nothing, and the capacity to converse on them as well; to assist the world in general to fill up the talking-spaces of the Lancers, or the intervals between the courses at dinner, in the absence of any more exciting topic turning up—a scandal, an elopement, or a flirtation.

The nature of the company in which you find yourself in the Burlington House Galleries very essentially depends on the hour of the day which you select to visit them. Miss Tabitha M'Munn, spinster, of Laurel Row, Clapham, plants herself in the first morning 'bus, and is at the doors almost as soon as they are open. 'In this way,' remarks Miss M'Munn, 'you secure moderate seclusion and quietude. In these days men stare so.' For the same reasons that this lady consents to display her virginal charms only when the day is young, Mrs. Hencoop elects to take her daughters, ere the more frivolous and later multitude profanes with its presence the golden halls of the Academicians. There is always a fair contingent of vigilant duennas and their charges between the hours of 8.30 and 11.0. What say the Misses Hencoop? 'Why not a little later, dear mamma?' thinking the while of new bonnet and dainty fichu. 'My dears,' is the reply, 'what do you go to the Academy for; to look at the pictures or the men; to see or to show yourselves?' Whereat Mary Jane and Susan hang their heads in

discomfiture and doubt. Or you may see in the chambers the severe man of business, legal or commercial. 'Tis the hour which he snatches from the day. A visit at any other time would be pure wickedness, sacrilege, wanton loss of precious moments, or whatever else you will. Eleven comes, and he is in counting-house or chambers, just as Miss M'Munn is talking religious scandal to her neighbours at Clapham. Sylphs there are, somewhat bony and angular, nor exceedingly juvenile, it must be confessed, who present themselves at the doors of Burlington House at this primitive hour, not because they deny any other portion of their time to the spectacle of pictorial art, but because they are going to make a day of it, and wish to commence their campaign early. We may see them later, and bid them good-bye for the present. But there are other spectators, other groups whom we may note at these matutinal visits of a more interesting and attractive description. We are told that there is little artistic sympathy—no genuine æsthetic instinct in the breast of the hard-worked, practical, severe Briton. Look there. Here you have gazers at canvas and sculpture who have spent their shilling readily and gladly to have an hour's enjoyment before the stern day's work commences. No Croesuses or magnates of law or commerce here—clerks of lilliputian salaries, governesses, to whom the coin they have paid at the entrance represents fairly half of their day's income. We wonder whether Mr. Ruskin has ever paid any attention to the composition of the little knots of the visitors whom we are looking at this morning at the only hour at which they are to be seen. Or if you want further proof of the fact that we are not such a people of Philistines and Goths as our detractors would fain represent, you may see boys and girls, meanly clad, vainly endeavouring to reproduce with their own unskilled pencils the outlines of the ideal figures and the forms which the painter's magic brush has made instinct with life. It is worth an early visit, this place, for the sake of

such sights as these. We don't much care about Miss Tabitha M'Munn, or masculine and early-rising females in general; but one gets glimpses into a life of which one may have had little idea— notions which may be novelties—that make it quite worth one's while to submit once in a way to the monstrous hardship of abandoning one's couch when, in the ordinary course of things, one would be revelling in the delights of one's beauty-sleep.

Place aux dames, or rather *aux demoiselles*. It is with the spectators and spectatresses at the Academy that we have to do, not the pictures—the specimens and representatives of mingled art and Nature that throng the floor, not the creations of Fine Art which crowd the walls.

'I've seen far finer women, ripe and real,
Than all the nonsense of your stone ideal.'

It is true that we are not as yet in the sculpture room; but the lines of Byron may be considered an equally appropriate motto for the contemplative philosopher in other apartments at the Burlington House Show. *Place aux demoiselles*, by all means—and first for the artistic young lady of the period. 'By many names men call us:' yes, we can conceive a variety of epithets being applied to these fair creatures who condescend habitually to grace the chambers of the Academicians with their presence. You may notice them here in great force to-day. Which charming member of the class shall we take first in order? If you look yonder you may see a young lady in attire somewhat sombre, but pretty, decidedly pretty, who will do for our purpose as well as any of her fellows. Certainly a severe student of nineteenth-century art. You do not recognise her? Look again. It is the hair, whose frizzled and toozled-out appearance reminds you of new-tossed hay, which refuses to be restrained within the limits of bonnet—and the latitude which we allow in selecting this particular description of head-gear is considerable—or of the ultimate syllable of that word, net, and which by some pro-

cess, fearful and wonderful, is elaborated into a gigantic top-knot, whose motto is obviously *excelsior*, and whose altitude is totally in defiance of the received fashions of the day, that betokens the presence of our artistic Mademoiselle No. 1. One supposes, and naturally enough, that the position of the *chignon* is intended to supplement a natural deficiency of the head, and that the art of the *coiffeur* has been called in to impress the beholder with a sense of abnormal cerebral development. Yes. Miss Raphael yonder is, *par excellence*, the type of the most approved order of young ladies whose passion is Art. 'Beatrice is all soul,' her fond mamma will tell you; 'all soul, I assure you. She is never happy except when she is looking at pictures.' Do you care about pioneering this spiritual young lady through the galleries? She will give you criticisms on each particular picture by the yard—Miss Beatrice Raphael has been devoting the whole of her afternoons lately to the study of the Art critiques in the columns of the 'Pall-Mall Gazette.' In an hour's time the pace begins to tell: you suggest an ice in the excellent refreshment-room on the basement floor. But Mademoiselle—though the humidity of her countenance gives evidence of her susceptibility of the heat of the temperature—is 'all soul.' 'No, thanks, Mr. Nameless; nothing now. The pictures are enough for me—but we might, I think, go to Grange's when we want some lunch.' Lunch, with Miss Raphael—as is proper and right with a young lady constructed upon such ethereal principles—means strawberries and cream; and strawberries and cream mean, to a practical brute like yourself, an expenditure of five shillings a plate. Beatrice is all soul; but, ye powers, what a capacity for the costly and diminutive fruit! Mr. Nameless, you had better produce your tablets and find an early luncheon engagement for 1.30, when Miss Raphael murmurs, in the intervals of her recitative Art-criticism, that Grange's shop almost confronts the Royal Academy.

Artistic young lady of the period, No. 2: readily recognisable. Miss Raphael's face was piquant: there was a delicate chiselling in the region of the nasal and oral development, which struck you as decidedly a hit on the part of Nature: the eyes were clear and penetrative: in a word, there was character in the face. You are escorting now an angel of artistic propensities, of an altogether different kind. Limp sick, washed-out countenance, painfully pendant *chignon*, weak eyes, and double tortoiseshell eye-glass, thin remarks, and feeble sentiments, are the characteristics of your fair charge.

'Can you tell me the time, Mr. Nameless?'

The faithful and friendly watch apprises you of the advent of the hour of one.

'Good gracious! I have an appointment in the City at half-past, which I cannot escape.' (The angel looks unutterable things through the tortoiseshell-rimmed glasses.) 'Indeed I must go.'

A desperate effort and you are off.

'City?'

'No—hang the City!' you mentally ejaculate. 'Drive to the Club.'

And as your hansom drives off, you say, '*Splendide mendax!*—nothing like a good—excuse! *Sic me servavit Apollo*—what a lucky thing the City exists!'

As for your charmer, she says to her duenna—

'I think Mr. Nameless might have stayed.'

'Yes. I never liked that young man,' is the reply.

Mademoiselle there, bright, busy, and active, has no pretensions to belong to the artistic division of her sex. Her artistic tastes are undeveloped: her critical faculty lies dormant—her judgments are contained in the simple statement of fact: 'This is pretty,' or, 'I don't like that,' or, 'Good gracious, what a fright!'—summary opinions delivered in tones more than sufficiently audible. Yet the young lady in question is the life and soul of her party—its pioneer and guide. Somewhat diminutive in size, lithe in

form, and quick in movement, you will see that she is ever just a little in advance of her friends. She has discovered a picture at which they look, and its number is exclaimed in accents of spasmodic earnestness. Herself she does not carry a catalogue: that duty is reserved for another member of the band.

'Look at number five thousand and two: that's a pretty face!' is the shrill observation of the lively young lady.

'"Aaron smiting the Rock"' is the reply, read aloud.

'Nonsense, Louie! how can you be so foolish? I never knew that the Israelites wore *fichus* and Alpine hats. You have made a mistake.'

'Yes, of course I have,' says the giggling, blushing Louie, with a simper that is meant to be attractive. 'I was looking at five hundred and two—five thousand and two is called "The Honeymoon on the Alps."'

And so on: for this is the sort of cackle you may hear *ad infinitum* in the rooms at Burlington House.

Talking about honeymoons, a visit to the Academy always brings one into contact with a vast number of happy couples—or otherwise—just launched together on the sea of life in the matrimonial bark. There is no mistaking them. Her very garments proclaim the presence of the bride. As for Edwin, he evidently enjoys the fact that Angelina leans heavily and perpetually on his arm,—a great deal more, considering the condition of the temperature, than he will when the pair have arrived at the Mr. and Mrs. Naggleton stage of their career. Charles Lamb wrote a wise and delightful paper on the conduct of newly-married persons. Therein he objects to the obtrusive publicity of their affectionate displays. So do we *in toto*. The world is not a dovecote. Billing and cooing are all very well in their proper place: but their proper place is not the floor of Burlington House. Young married people, be good enough to move on. Don't lose yourselves in raptures over the charms of that sentimental group on canvas, and don't whisper pretty nothings into each other's ears, to the

effect that the love which the painter has depicted is not half so intense as that which thrills each of your bosoms. Or if you must surrender yourselves to interchange of ecstatic soliloquies, there is the sculpture-room, or the refreshment-room: though Angelina abhors the idea of the favourite fresh strawberry-ice, and refuses to come down from the seventh heaven of delight to taste the curious cup which Edwin used to brew so well.

It is pleasant, it is even refreshing, to hear the unsophisticated comments of the heavy country cousin contingent on the painting before them. They reveal by their remarks a profound and entire ignorance of the fundamental principles of Art, not to say—whenever the opportunity of exhibiting it, by the presence of a costume picture, is offered—of the whole range of history, ancient and modern, as well, which presents an agreeable contrast to the predominant feature of this age of universal knowledge.

“Belisarius looking down upon the captured city,” remarks one of them, reading from the catalogue. “Who was Belisarius?”

“Hush, Eliza! Don’t you know?” the happy husband remarks; “the king who fiddled when Rome was burnt?”

Unaccustomed to crowds, these good people are doubtless utterly ignorant of the extent to which their voice is audible, and perhaps have not the remotest idea that, of all things which it is impossible not to overhear, the most impossible is an emphatic whisper.

“Do let us look a little longer at this delicious colouring,” says a languid lady, with a sigh, to her stalwart lord, who is in attendance at her side. “It is beautiful: it makes me quite happy; indeed it is quite heavenly.”

“Hang it, Laura!” replies the gentleman, “do let us move on. I want to see that stunning picture of Gladiators. I am told it is A 1.”

And the simple-hearted stalwart yeoman, with the painfully exotic wife, moves on vigorously, while the delicate creature at his side heaves

a sigh as she thinks of the materialism of man.

“Mamma,” says some *enfant terrible* to his parent as they stand before some work of the extreme pre-Raphaelite school, “why do they make all the faces so ugly?—why are the women all so thin, and their noses all so flat, exactly like cook, I think? And why is everything painted green, and why—?”

“Hush! my dear,” interposes mamma, though in truth the observation of the intelligent child would, if the truth be known, find an echo in the minds of many an adult bystander, and suggest considerations which have entered into many an older head.

We have glanced at the young lady of the period who has a taste for art; is there no such thing as the young man endowed with the same proclivities? Of course there is, and in a variety that is infinite. To see him in his most approved shape and development one should select the young Oxford fellow of his college. That gentleman there with the locks somewhat unkempt and the appearance generally distraught is Mr. *Æstheticus Æthix*, who a year ago was elected fellow of St. Bonifacio. His rooms are really some of the prettiest in Oxford. There are photographs from Rome and Venice, line engravings, and one or two gems in oils and water-colours. His furniture is all of black oak, and comes entirely from Wardour Street. If you ask him for water wherewith to quench your thirst, he will offer it you in a curiously-fashioned glass that comes from Murano. It is in this elegant boudoir—for the softness of the appearance of the whole room reminds you more of the boudoir than the cloister—that *Æthix* loves to meditate over Italian treatises on art, and to talk of the mediæval *chefs-d’œuvre* with his companions who are of his way of thinking. *Æthix* spends his vacations in roaming through Continental galleries: he has smoked his cigarette, and drunk his coffee in the *Café Greco*; and he can tell you more than most people of the ateliers of Paris. He is primed full with

all the slang of art. Of English painters he thinks but poorly, and indeed he will characterize the entire exhibition as being miserably indicative of artistic decadence in his own country. This is the current cant of the school to which he belongs. The knowledge of art which Æthix in reality possesses does not exceed a fluent command of its jargon, picked up parrot-like in the course of reading and information. Yet Æthix arrogates to himself the air of infallible authority, and when he returns to St. Boniface you may be quite sure that he will take the first opportunity of ventilating his views on the subject to his brethren in the common room. Æthix is a prig, of course, but then as being a fair specimen of the very young fellow of the present day, as that gentleman is to be seen within the University of Oxford, he deserves some attention.

We move on with the crowd, and we find ourselves suddenly face to face with a very distinguished art-critic. He has come to take, for the twentieth time, a last look round. A very influential gentleman indeed is Mr. Aristarchus Pigment, greatly courted by artists, and, to the credit of his good-nature be it said, a zealous champion in print of his friends.

'By Jove, Pigment,' it was remarked to him one day, 'how careful you are of the interests of your friends!'—an extravagantly-eulogistic critique, had just appeared in the journal for which Pigment writes of an absurdly poor picture.

'And a pretty sort of fellow I should be,' rejoins the ingenuous and genial Pigment, 'if I was not careful of the interests of my friends.' On the whole, though, this gentleman is a fair and honest critic. He is not the victim of cliques to the extent which makes so much of our art-criticism in the present day utterly corrupt and untrustworthy. True, as we have said, Mr. Pigment has his friends, but then he can see artistic merit in others than those with whom he claims personal acquaintance: and this is a great deal more than can be said of

nine-tenths of the gentlemen who 'do' the notices of pictorial exhibitions for the journals of Great Britain. If you look there you will see an illustrious personage whom his friends and admirers tell you is the greatest art-critic of the day. But then this opinion is limited to those who compose the extreme world of the pre-Raphaelite order. Critic, forsooth! he is simply the spokesman of a certain school and clique; if in what he is pleased to call his criticisms he does mention the works of others than his own immediate intimates, it is simply for the purpose of censure and contempt. He will rave by the column in print over the glories of those paintings which are the works of any one member of his particular set; he will dilate in tones which ring from one end of the room to the other, on the floor of Burlington House itself, on the singular excellence of any one of these productions, and sneer as much as you like at whatever is painted by the brush of artist whose powers belong to a different order, and whose works are of a different style. There is apparent enough of partiality and cliquism in the literary criticism of the day, but it is as nothing to that which pervades the whole range of artistic.

Another turn and we are brought face to face with one of the chief patrons of art of the new order. Mr. Thunderbolt Flash is a Manchester manufacturer, a great collector of pictures, and a great patron of artists. But, hang it, he will tell you, he must have the real thing. 'None of your sullen skies and neutral tints for me. I like something with lots of life in it, and lots of colour. If you pay a good price have a good thing, say I.' And Mr. Thunderbolt Flash's idea of a good thing is something which from its multitudinous hues reminds you strongly of a coloured photograph of the interior of the kaleidoscope worked off by some instantaneous process. Scenes of nineteenth-century life, and the newer the fashions are the better—costume pictures of every conceivable de-

gree of gaudiness, make up Thunderbolt's idea of high art. And men of this order it is whose influence is most prejudicial to the interests of English art—men whose standard of execution is show. Artists, like others, must live by their work: and to do this they must busy themselves with what pays best. What the patrons are, that, in the main the patronized will be. It is the *nouveaux riches* who are the enemies of art.

We have alluded to the sculpture room: it might be called the flirtation room. Its seclusion is convenient, and there is a seductive influence in its quiet. When mamma cannot make out what has become of two certain members of her party, she is quite sure to be able eventually to discover them in the immediate vicinity of a bust of her gracious Majesty Queen Victoria. But there are other scenes of a less tender and sentimental nature which one may witness in this locality. It is a favourite haunt at the mid-day hour of those severe Academy goers who, determined to realise the value of the shillings which they expended on their entrance to the uttermost farthing, have come with the intention of making a long day of it, and are equipped accordingly. Then and there you may see packets of sandwiches produced, and devoured;

curious bottles slyly produced from divers pockets, and greedily drained. The lady will arrange her bonnet and smooth her ribbons. The gentleman is armed with a pocket-comb, with which instrument he rearranges his whiskers or adjusts his moustache.

Talking about severe Academy goers, you see one there. He is in the ante-hall, and was just on the point of leaving through the circular gate; but he was seized with a sudden misgiving ere the final step had been taken. Was he quite certain he had seen all that he ought to see, or could see? Would not the possible conviction come upon him, after he had shut himself out from the scene, that there were certain pictures which he had passed over? To assure himself, the honest fellow produces his well-worn catalogue, and, leaning against the door-post, peruses it and reperuses it for the ninety-ninth time. It is a process of severe self-examination. But at length the ordeal has been gone through satisfactorily, and our friend feels himself at liberty to emerge through the portal, with eyes that smart and head that aches with all the exertion through which he has gone. The conscientious and energetic visitor to the Academy has his work cut out for him in good earnest.



PEARL AND THE CRICKETERS.

IT is the characteristic of people who live in the country to lay stress on the *minutiae* of position, and to be jealous of each other in these important matters. This sort of conduct produces a good deal of uncomfortableness, without answering any satisfactory purpose, but I suppose that a human being cannot live without ambition; and your bucolicals, as Sir Pierce Shafton would call them, being too stupid or too idle to succeed in the real battle of life, cultivate the arts of attack and defence still, and practise them on the only arena where they have a chance of escaping discomfiture.

I am, perhaps, writing rather rudely; but I speak from a somewhat unpleasant experience. This same experience befell me about a twelvemonth after my succession to a country doctor's practice in the village of Highborough—a village that was not as other villages, but held its head rather above them. It was neither dirty nor small, and in it, and immediately round it, were villas and country-houses in unusual number; consequently, *noblesse oblige* was a sentiment held in high honour about Highborough.

It was not, however, till an event occurred that will shortly appear in this story that I suffered much annoyance from this turn of mind of the Highboroughites. They were, most of them, my patients, and I dare say they felt it would be injudicious to give themselves airs to their medical adviser. Besides, it transpired that though I was merely a young country doctor without a physician's diploma, I was descended from a family that had once stood much higher in the world than it did now; and I was also regarded, I found, as both personable and presentable.

From these causes, I found matters, at first, pleasant enough, and I was asked to the croquet and dancing parties, though, of those who gave me the invitations, no less than three were more or less connected with peers of the realm, and

one was actually a baronet, and another (an exceedingly indigent patrician who was always late in his payments for medical attendance) had the title of Honourable.

I had resided in Highborough nearly a year, when there happened to me what I then esteemed as a great calamity. I found myself falling in love with the prettiest and richest girl in the neighbourhood. I left off shaving, because my dressing-room reminded me of her. It commanded a view of arable and pasture lands which belonged to her in her own right. She was an orphan, and lived with a cousin, a rather lively, rather pretty girl, and with an aunt of a neutral tint.

I could not bear the contemplation, which inspired me with despair, and almost made my razor linger suspiciously about my throat. My love, however, grew stronger, as my beard grew longer, every day. My friend Palliser—Pea-shooting Palliser, as he was called by men who remembered his university career—my friend, Pea-shooting Palliser, told me that my appearance was improving. But if I had grown as handsome as Apollo, what chance should I, a poor country doctor, have with Pearl Fanshawe, the beautiful heiress, about whom every young aristocrat in the neighbourhood was hovering, while she spoilt the marriageable chances of every other girl for miles around?

That fatal picnic! Picnics are not quite as fashionable, I thought to myself, as they used to be; would they had 'all gone out of fashion quite,' as the song says. Then I should not have had that delicious destructive half-hour with Pearl in the woodlands; should not have been blinded by her large blue-grey eyes, and meshed in the deep-brown hair drawn off heavily from above them; should not have remembered, night and day, the clear features on which was fixed the faint, pomegranate flush of utter youth; and the light tall figure, and the gracious words—for she talked to me with perfect

ease and kindness, in her quiet pleasant manner, nowise annoyed that I had contrived or chanced to find the place next her as we sat at our picnic in the woods. You may see from what I have written, that, just at this epoch, I was in what an elderly gentleman would call a very foolish, and a man of the world a very amusing, condition. Well, there is some folly that, to my thinking, is nobler, and better, and purer than some wisdom. However, I was in the midst of this hopeless love-fit when my friend Palliser called on me one morning, and asked me if I would join a new cricket-club which was being formed in the neighbourhood. The club was to have some peculiar features. It was to consist entirely of unmarried men, because married men, as Palliser put it, ought to stay at home with their wives and families, and not to go gadding about with nomad cricket-clubs, such as this was to be. Then, again, the club was to be select, as opposed to the regular village club, which latter was undeniably miscellaneous. To secure this end, the election of members was to be made by ballot. This last circumstance made me hesitate.

'The men are very conceited about here, and I shall, as likely as not, be blackballed,' I said.

'Nobody dislikes you,' said Pea-shooting Palliser, 'except the Honourable; and he daren't pill you, because you've pill him, and not been paid for it yet, I expect.'

'Well,' I said, 'I don't feel inclined to run the risk.'

'Nonsense,' Palliser said, starting up out of his chair.

'And what is more, I will not,' I said, regretfully, for I was not ill-disposed to obtain some diversion from my present hopeless feelings, and the excitement of this new cricket-club might afford it. 'I'm sorry,' I went on; 'I should rather have liked to become a mem—confound it! what's that?'

I put my hand up quickly to my face, conscious of a sharp stinging sensation not by any means too far off my left eye.

'My dear fellow,' Palliser said, tranquilly, from the other side of

the table, 'it's a just, though playful, corrective of your obstinacy, administered by my pea-shooter: 'I'll shoot again if you persist in not joining us.'

I should here perhaps explain that Palliser, though a capital fellow, was, and for the matter of that, is, a 'funny man.' He is still recollected in that character, I have heard, at the University of Oxford, where he appears to me to have acquired no accomplishment but that of shooting peas with an aim as undeviating, though not as deadly, as an Indian's with his similarly projected reed. At Oxford he had a monomania for this recreation. He invented what he called the invisible pea-shooter, a very small tube, so easily concealed that no one knew when he was about to shoot. He established a panic at the Union, where he spoilt many perorations by hitting the orators on their noses with his peas. From the gallery in the schools, where undergraduates are allowed, we believe, to listen to the *vivâ voce* examinations, the audacious Palliser shot a public examiner. There was a row, and an inquiry. But Palliser's guilt never got beyond the undergraduates, and, ever after, he enjoyed a reputation amongst them equal in some respects, and superior in others, to that of an Ireland scholar.

'Well,' I said, 'if you'll keep that instrument quiet, I'll perpend the matter.'

And accordingly I thought it over, and, at last, came to the conclusion that my fears were morbid, and that I might as well take my chance with the ballot-box. While I was still in doubt, Palliser called the next morning to tell me that there was a ballot that very afternoon, and he expedited my decision by peppering the passers-by in the main street of the village with his pea-shooter. As the peas came from my window, I saw, of course, that it would be supposed that I had shot them. Not wishing thus to injure my professional prospects, I turned the drift of Palliser's ideas by consenting to the proposal he had come to make.

'We've decided on the name of the club,' he said, pocketing the pea-shooter, to my great relief; "The Saunterers;" quiet and unpretending. We shall do the thing well—claret-cup dinners, and that kind of thing—and add a little archery, perhaps, which will give us a tone, and a ball in the winter.'

'The pea-shooter won't give you a tone,' I said; 'The Saunterers will distinctly object to the pea-shooter.'

'I have no doubt,' Palliser said; but 'I can resign it without much of a struggle: I have used it very sparingly of late; and as I am going to be married I had, perhaps, better drop it altogether.'

'You going to be married?' I asked.

'Yes. Why shouldn't I?'

'Who is she?'

'Pearl Fanshawe——' he began.

I suppose that on hearing this I was so taken by surprise as to betray myself by my agitation. Palliser paused a moment, looked at me, and—

'Has a cousin,' he went on; 'as I was about to add, when you began to glare at me so. That cousin, to my thinking, is nicer even than Pearl. She is staying with Pearl now, and I am going to be married to her; not to Pearl, but to her cousin, Emma Thorpe.'

'I congratulate you, my dear fellow,' I said, heartily and hurriedly. 'Now you say this ballot——'

'Come, come,' Palliser interrupted, 'this won't do, Payne. I've caught you. I've suspected before, but I know now, why you've been so distant lately. People are saying everywhere that you are getting quite a disagreeable young man. It was that picnic did it, I expect—come now, wasn't it?'

'You seem to know all about my inmost feelings,' I said, gloomily. 'Perhaps it was.'

'Well now,' my friend said, 'I'm going up to the house directly after the club meeting this afternoon. It won't last long; the balloting will be mere form, and there's only one match to settle, the first one, with the Highbingham Club, which, by

the way, as it's our first, we particularly want to win. So I'll just drop in here and tell you you're elected, and then we'll go up together, and do a little croquet. You can be Pearl's partner, and play against Emma and me.'

'I had rather not go,' I said.

'I shall call for you, anyhow,' Palliser said. 'At five minutes to four this afternoon a pea will rattle against your middle window-pane. Come down into the street, and you will find me waiting.'

And my friend left me.

Palliser was right in surmising that I could not resist this temptation. Some five minutes after the time he had fixed, he announced his arrival, as he had told me he should, by shooting a pea at my window. I was waiting, and condemning my own folly all the while. I went down to him prepared to pay a visit which, I felt, could but increase my present sufferings.

I found my friend below, not looking quite so cheerful as usual, though he greeted me with unusual warmth and fondness. He did not say a word about the ballot, and, as my mind was full of Pearl, I forgot the projected club and my candidature altogether, and asked him no question.

The manor-house, where Pearl lived, is only a quarter of a mile from the village, and we were soon there. Palliser was, of course, received with great amiability; and when he said, referring to me, that Mr. Payne, from his natural bashfulness, had not been brought up to the manor-house without great difficulty—an observation which, I thought, might have been put better—Miss Fairfax was candid enough, in her reply, to put me quite at my ease.

'I only hope, Mr. Payne,' she said, 'that you will excuse the deficiencies of our new page. We have not had him a week, but his blunders seem hopeless. The first day he was here, before he had been in the house three hours, he came and told me that a person wanted to see me. "Where is he?" I said. "In the servants' hall, miss," the boy answered; and I went in and found

that the person was Sir Frederick Dashwood, who had called, and had been shown by the page into this apartment, and presented with a three-legged stool to sit upon.'

'I should have liked to have seen Dashwood,' Palliser observed. 'His lofty stature, magnificent appearance, and, I have no doubt, sumptuous apparel, must have afforded a pleasing contrast with the three-legged stool. Was he sitting on it when you entered?'

'He looked handsomer on the stool than you do off it, Mr. Palliser,' Pearl returned, rather curtly.

I was not so much amused at all this as I might have been, particularly when Pearl so keenly defended Sir Frederick. I knew that there was a rumour that Miss Fanshawe and Sir Frederick were engaged, and I thought this call of his might have ended more pleasantly than it began. But at this juncture we went out to croquet. I played very badly, not being in that easy frame of mind which conduces to success in games. After Pearl and I had lost every time, owing to my incapacity, we went in to tea. This repast was served, inaccurately, by the new page. I felt all the afternoon that I was oppressively stupid, and sat making a feeble attempt to look as if I had an appetite for a sponge biscuit, when the new page entered, with agitation depicted on his countenance.

'Please, miss,' he said, rapidly and excitedly, 'the police is here after Mr. Payne.'

I rose; so did Miss Fanshawe.

'What do you mean, sir, by bringing such impertinences into this room?' she said, with evident anger.

'If you please, miss, the police says as Mr. Payne was shooting peas out of his window all this morning, and he hit lots of people, and him, the policeman, too, as he was passing by, and he's followed him hup, miss—'

'Then he may go before him down again,' Miss Fanshawe said, interrupting the new page. But the new page was irrepressible;

'And please, miss, he says as it's all over the town as Mr. Payne's

blackballed for the new cricket-club.'

'I beg your pardon, Mr. Payne, for letting the boy go on so far,' Pearl said, turning to me. 'Go back to the servants' hall, sir,' she said to the boy, 'and tell the policeman that when I want him, I will send for him; and get rid of him, or I will get rid of you. And then come back and beg Mr. Payne's pardon for your impertinence.'

Palliser, during this scene, had, as had also his *fiancée*, been almost suffocated with laughter. But when the blackballing was mentioned he suddenly became grave.

I had, indeed, been blackballed; but he did not mention the fact till we were walking home together after a delightful, but, as I felt, injudicious visit. He then explained. It appeared that the opposition to my election had been very decided indeed, and that six or seven balls of the fatal colour had been found in the box.

'They worked the thing very quietly,' Palliser said; 'but that conceited fool of a baronet headed it, I'm convinced. But, I say, Payne, why on earth don't you go in for Pearl? I'm as sure as ever I was with my pea-shooter, when I was in practice, that she likes you. How serious and indignant she was when the new page, at your expense, exhibited his natural candour. And, as Emma told me, five minutes ago, she's even more indignant about this blackballing business, and vowed that if she could think of any little harmless plot against them, she would contrive that the Saunterers should lose their first match.'

'Then,' I said, striking my stick hard on the moonlit ground, 'I'll play against them, for one. But as for my marrying Miss Fanshawe, the idea's ridiculous. I am a poor, despised Sawbones; she's the prettiest and the richest girl in the shire. If I tried, I should be out of the race from start to finish; and, besides, I've no intention of exposing myself to the suspicion of being, what I am not, a fortune-hunter. As for her being kind to me, it's her natural goodness of

heart. Depend upon it, if she were really disposed to be more than a friend, she would be reserved and not stand up for me. It's the way of girls.'

'It's not Pearl's way,' Palliser said. 'She's always been in a position that put shyness rather out of court. I don't mean that she'd make the first advances, not she: no girl would be slower to do so; but she's not exactly "so much alarmed that she is quite alarming," as Byron expresses it.'

'Oh nonsense!' I returned. 'She's sorry for me, and thinks my position an awkward one.'

'Pity is akin to love,' Palliser remarked.

'She likes,' I said, 'that big, good-looking, conceited fellow, who always reminds me of the girl's brother in "Maud";' Dashwood I mean.'

Palliser appeared to see the force of my remarks, and, on reaching my door, we parted, and did not meet again till the day of the match. I played with the village club, and was never in so gloomy a temper as on this occasion. I had heard that Miss Fanshawe was leaving the neighbourhood for some time—going to Canada. And there had been a farewell dancing-party at the manor-house on the previous evening, attended by all the Saunterers, to which I had not received an invitation. And, remembering the views I understood Miss Fanshawe to have expressed relative to the way in which the Saunterers had behaved to me, I was furious against the inconstancy of the sex, and indignant with myself for not being able to throw off my attachment to a girl so insincere, flighty, forgetful, and spoilt. When I saw her drive in her basket-phaeton on to the field, I held sulkily aloof, while the Saunterers, to a man, flocked eagerly round her. I did not go near enough to hear her musical voice, but I could tell from a distance that she was in high spirits, by her demeanour, and that of those who surrounded her. I tried, with indifferent success, to concentrate my mind on the match. I was madly

anxious that we should beat the Saunterers; but I felt that ours was a very composite eleven with a 'tail,' and that theirs was a strong one, comprising several bats dreaded upon Fenner's and the Magdalen ground, and well provided with swift bowlers and quick fieldsmen.

The Saunterers went in first and played before the eyes of Pearl gazing from her phaeton. The most extraordinary and indescribable innings I ever saw. At the time I was utterly puzzled by it, and I should think that many of the spectators, such at least as understood the game, will to their dying day, in the seasons of memory, try to fathom the mystery of that innings. It was a short and a poor innings, far inferior to what might have been reasonably expected from such a team. With the exception of Palliser, who went in hindmost man of the eleven, played well, and brought out his bat for a very fair score, the Saunterers batted, one and all, with the most absurd irresolution I ever saw in a cricket-field; they played, that is, not as if they wanted to make runs, nor as if they wanted to get 'out,' but as if they could not make up their minds which of these ends to compass.

And just as they batted, so they bowled and fielded when the village club took its turn at the wickets. The bowlers did not bowl individually badly, but their balls were neither swift nor straight, and I knew that two of them at least could be both, at need. The fieldsmen did not egregiously miss balls hit to them in the air or on the ground, the contemptuous exclamation, 'butterfingers,' was not heard round the field; but they fielded languidly and loosely, and let many more runs be got than need be got. I thought, at first, that it was a concerted plan, and that they were giving themselves airs. They meant, perhaps, these contemptibly-conceited Saunterers, to make an ostentation of not putting forth their strength against us. But I very soon, narrowly watching them, perceived that however little each member of the eleven exerted himself, he was quite as much surprised as I was at the

apathy of his comrades. In fact, before the Saunterers had been out in the field half an hour every one of their faces wore a more or less bewildered and ridiculous expression. Each languid cricketer was shocked that the rest between them did not make up for his own indolence. Still our eleven was so bad that, even with these advantages, we had lost all our wickets but one, and were then twenty runs behind. I had been chosen to go in 'first wicket down,' the post of honour, and I was 'well set' when the last man joined me. He, I knew, was an utter incapable. But by judiciously playing for 'singles' at the end of each over, I managed to give him a sinecure as far as batting went, and to receive every ball for many successive overs on my own bat, this being our only chance. The score rapidly rose. We were within seven of a 'tie,' when I got well hold of an 'on' ball and lifted it over the tents and out of the field. Down went the figure 6 on my line in the scoring-book.

'One to tie two to win' was buzzed round the ring of spectators. I made the single off the next ball, but it was not the last of the over. The next was, and my *vis-à-vis* received it amidst breathless suspense. It was not straight, and was, considering the bowling power of the man who delivered it, slow. But my partner was a person to whom the easy in cricket was the difficult, and instead of availing himself of his opponent's generosity, he mildly scooped the ball up into the air. It came down into point's hands, so gently that a child in a pinafore might have caught it. 'Point' was Sir Frederick Dashwood, my enemy. I noticed him glance with a curious expression towards Pearl's phaeton, as the ball came down delicately; and then he did what hardly seemed feasible—let it slip through his hands. From the whole field there arose hereat a roar of derision, at which the baronet went very red in the face. He was not virulently abused by the other Saunterers, but far worse than this was the loudly-expressed contempt of the spectators, which almost be-

came annoying as he walked back to the tent, the match being now over in our favour, for we ran the hit on speculation.

I was walking off the ground in a melancholy mood enough, forgetful already of the plaudits which I received for the triumph I had won for the village club over 'those confounded, conceited Saunterers.' Any little excitement the match might have afforded me had passed away, and a reaction had succeeded, when, as I opened the gate at the entrance of the field, I suddenly felt a sharp stinging pain under my left whisker. I instantly knew that it was inflicted by Palliser's pen-shooter, and not being in a good temper I turned round in a state of high irritation. There was Palliser close behind me.

'When are you going to leave off that absurd, childish trick?'

'My dear fellow,' Palliser returned, 'you have received the last shot which I shall ever fire from this or any similar tube. See, I throw it away,' and he jerked his favourite instrument into a dry ditch over an intervening hedge. 'Emma objects to it, takes the same view of it as you do, that it's, perhaps, rather a puerile source of amusement.'

'I should think it was,' I said, 'and I wish you would have chosen some one else for your farewell victim—Sir Frederick Dashwood, for instance. Why on earth did he miss that catch?'

'He is as savage in the tent just now as the examiner was when my pellet hit him in the schools,' Palliser returned. 'Some roughs got round the tent and told him he did it because he had a bet on the match. But I'll tell you the real reason, in fact, it was with that object that I drew your attention just now.'

'Which you might have done in some other way,' I said. 'But it seems to me that, altogether, there's some mystery about this match. The Saunterers hesitated about every ball they played, or bowled, or stopped.'

'Men have a natural reluctance to play under their proper mark at cricket. Besides, it's difficult, I

should say,' Palliser replied. 'But you observed correctly. I'll tell you why they did it. It was done at Pearl Fanshawe's request.'

'At Miss Fanshawe's request?'

'Yes. She's not in your good books, now, I suppose. After all her professions of friendship, not to ask you up to her farewell party was a most unkind cut, wasn't it?'

'I told you I was right about Miss Fanshawe,' I said, coldly. 'She never cared for me.'

'That doesn't prove that you were right,' he returned. 'However, at her party, Pearl told every one of these men, separately, mind you, that she wished the village club to win the match. So (I have it all from Emina, you know), each of them acted on her suggestion, without knowing that the rest had received the same hint.'

'Well,' I said, 'there's no accounting for woman's freaks. Sir Frederick's was the crowning piece of self-sacrifice, and I don't doubt that he will be rewarded.'

'I'll tell you another thing,' Palliser said. 'Pearl had her work cut out last night. How many men do you suppose offered to her, knowing she was going away? Why, every man, except myself, that played with the Saunterers to-day, and some more besides.'

'She must have given them every opportunity,' I said; 'unless they proposed *en masse*.'

'She did,' Palliser replied. 'As you might have gathered from what I said just now, their propositions were made between the dances in the usual way, *tête-à-tête*.'

'And I suppose she took the baronet,' I said, as coolly as I could.

'I am glad we have reached your house,' Palliser answered; 'you look so white. You know what to prescribe for yourself, I suppose? but I should suggest a stimulant—a cordial was the old-fashioned term.'

'Confound you!' I said, quickly. Has she taken him? Though it's nothing to me.'

'If you will come up to the manor-house this evening, you will see,' Palliser replied. 'I will call

for you at seven precisely. And now go in, and take a nip of brandy.'

As before, Palliser called for me, and I went up with him to the manor-house. I could trust him, and I knew he would not place me in any ignominious or awkward position. But I was somewhat disconcerted when, after sitting with the aunt, Miss Thorpe, and Palliser for a short time in the drawing-room, the door opened, and the new page—who was by this time taking more kindly to his function—announced, with much emphasis, 'Sir Frederick Dashwood.'

The baronet entered. His bearing was confident; as, however, I suppose, that of baronets usually is; his evening costume was faultless, of course, but a moss-rose which he wore in his buttonhole gave him a festal air, and his gold sleeve-links, of which he afforded us a pretty good glimpse, were anchors, the emblems of hope. I knew he had been the main agent in blackballing me, and hardly bowed to him therefore. I fancied he looked rather surprised at seeing me, which I, then, put down to an idea of his that I was not a fit visitor at the manor-house. However, he sat down, and began to talk with his usual ease. Presently the new page announced another visitor, one of the Saunterers. He, too, entered in an assured manner, and had a flower in his buttonhole. But, evidently, both he and the baronet were taken aback at seeing each other, and their greetings were awkwardish.

'There will be rare fun presently,' Palliser whispered, leaning over to me.

I asked him, in the same undertone where Miss Fanshawe was.

'You'll know all about it in a jiffy,' was his rejoinder; and while he was speaking the door was again opened and a third Saunterer entered, smiling, dress-suited, rose-buttonholed. But he stopped short, and his countenance assumed a sudden change of expression when he saw the other members of his club. They looked equally uncomfortable, and I began to think the

Saunterers a queer set, and that I was well out of them. Half an hour more, and all the Saunterers and a few non-cricketing young gentlemen of the neighbourhood were sitting in the drawing-room, looking anything but pleased with each other's company. Conversation was almost at a stand-still. I could not but see that there was some mystery—that some strange scene was about to be enacted, and I waited eagerly. Still Miss Fanshawe did not appear.

At last Sir Frederick Dashwood rose, went to the ottoman on which Miss Thorpe was sitting, and, leaning over the back of it, whispered to her. Miss Thorpe's reply, however, was made in loud tones:

'If, Sir Frederick, you will give my aunt your arm, we shall find supper in the dining-room, and my cousin will be there as soon as she possibly can.'

With as much cordiality as he could achieve, the baronet did as she asked him, and we all followed into the dining-room, where supper was laid.

'I trust all you fellows haven't dined too late to be peckish,' Palliser said.

Meanwhile the baronet, with a very ill grace, seeing nothing else for it, sat down and began the carving of a cold turkey, and the rest followed his lead. There was plenty of wine, and it was good. The Saunterers therefore made the best of things, and in twenty minutes' time were beginning to thaw from their normal state, that evening of frost, when suddenly there was a dead silence. Having entered so quietly that, I think, scarcely any one but myself perceived the door open, Pearl Fanshawe stood before us.

The ideas of the poets, I consider, verge occasionally on the absurd. I cannot sympathise with their ecstasies respecting female beauty. The generality of girls may be more or less comely and pleasant to look at, but I see no reasonableness in the adoration which their personal appearance excites. Still at that moment, perhaps, Pearl would have justified such raptures as are indulged in by a Tom Moore or an

Apuleius. With her slender figure drawn up to its full height, and her little head borne bravely, she stood before us, who had all risen at her entrance. As she looked at us her fair cheek flushed scarlet, but her eyes did not decline.

'Gentlemen,' she said, with even a slight smile on her lips, 'I dare say you are very much surprised at seeing each other, inasmuch as it was in private that I asked you to come here, each of you, for a final answer to-night. However,'—here she suddenly paused in great confusion, after hitherto speaking steadily; she had caught sight of me, and I flushed as much as she did. She was silent for a few minutes, and then, looking towards Palliser, she said—

'Mr. Palliser, this is your fault; you have brought to my house an uninvited guest—'

'I fancied as much,' Sir Frederick Dashwood put in, giving me a very contumelious look; indeed I felt what a fool I had been: how I had compromised myself by trusting Palliser—in fact, I could say nothing to excuse myself. Still, I thought that, after the way in which I had been received before upon Palliser's introduction, more allowance might have been made. I was at the door, however, quickly. But Palliser was quicker, and, the key being in, he turned it, and put it in his pocket. So I was compelled to stay.

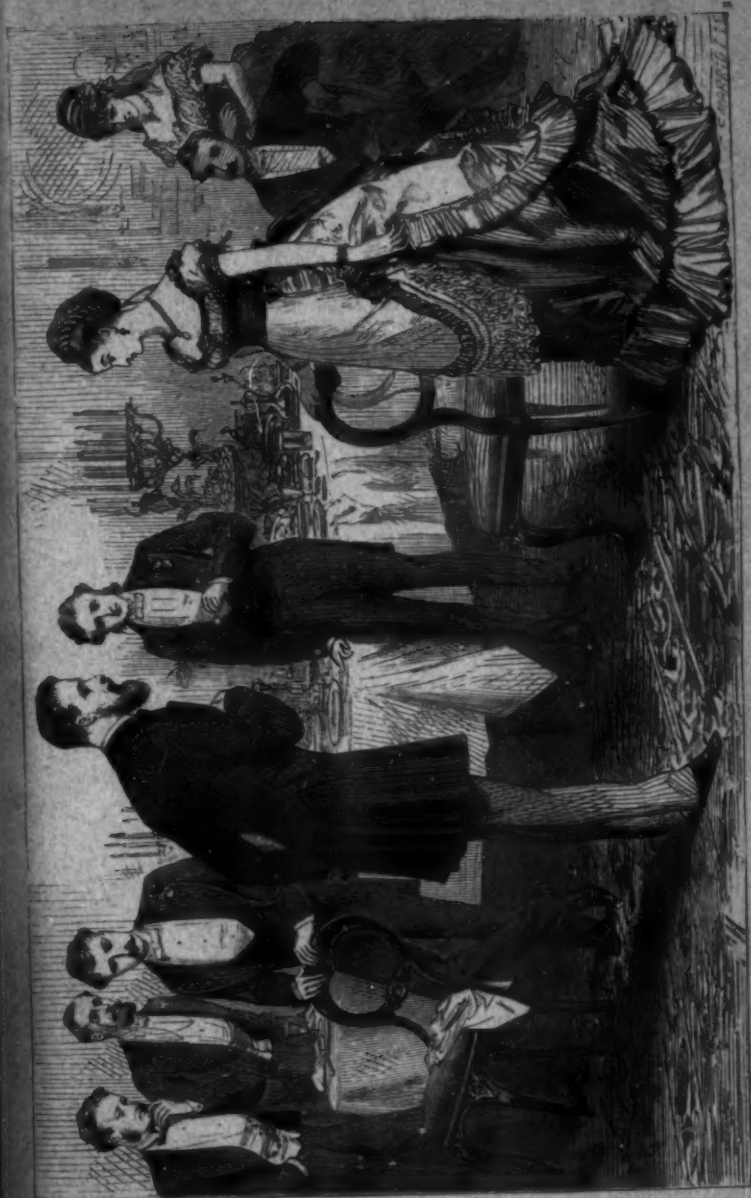
'Well, gentlemen,' Pearl resumed—'I was behind her now, and she seemed to have forgotten me—I thank you very much for your proposals; but I have to ask you whether you will renew them when you hear what I have to tell you? In my uncle's will, who left me all this property of mine, there is a clause which states that in the event of my marriage every farthing and farthing's worth of that property is to be divided between six charitable institutions.' And she paused.

Sir Frederick Dashwood came a step forward instantly, as red as the rose in his buttonhole.

'I must say,' he blurted out, 'that you have used me very rudely. I am not speaking to one of my own sex, and I am moderate in my ex-

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[See the Square]

PEARL AND THE CRICKETERS.

Drawn by Alfred Hunt. I

pressions. My proposal, at least, was private.'

'And mine.' 'And mine.' 'And mine,' several of the others said.

'And you have made it public, Miss Fanshawe,' the baronet resumed. 'I—I—I shall go home at once. Palliser, let me out.'

There were, besides Palliser and myself, fifteen men in the room. Of these ten followed the baronet. I stayed; so did four others.

'Am I to understand,' Miss Fanshawe asked, after a brief pause, 'that you four gentlemen abide by your proposals?'

They all bowed. And at this moment I came forward and stood face to face with Pearl. She flushed deeper than ever, and, for the first time, her eyes dropped.

'The only apology I can make,' I said, 'for my intrusion is to add myself to these four gentlemen; and I am proud to be found in their company. It may serve for an apology, for strong feeling somewhat excuses rudeness. Prompted by such feeling, I ask you, Miss Fanshawe, to be my wife.'

With her eyes again raised, Pearl said, with a slight smile playing about the corners of her mouth, 'What I have stated about my uncle's will is strictly true; but that will shortly afterwards returns to the subject, and affirms that the clause depriving me of my property in case of my marriage, is to be of none effect provided that a gentleman who is named, my uncle's oldest friend, approves of my choice. My uncle adds that he has made his will in this manner in order to protect me as far as possible from being deceived by fortune-hunters. This guardian of my matrimonial affairs lives in Canada, and I sail thither during the week. I thank you, Mr. Harcourt, Mr. Vaughan, Mr. Lawes, and Mr. Hotherington, for your disinterestedness, and I regret that my feelings would not justify me in consulting my uncle about any of you. To tell the truth, I did not anticipate that any of you would stand my test, and I feel that you have not been overwell used in this matter.'

All this time Pearl studiously abstained from looking at me.

'And do you propose to make any mention to your guardian of Mr. Payne?' I said.

'She has answered your question by an exhaustive process,' Palliser observed. 'Aren't you satisfied?'

'I do,' said Pearl, with her eyes downcast. And suddenly she lifted them, and looked at the four rejected suitors, who, in some dudgeon, were preparing to go, and indeed, from the force of circumstances, found themselves cutting about as ridiculous a figure, as, in a quiet way, they well could. 'One moment more,' Pearl proceeded. 'Before you go, I wish you to understand why I have made this final answer of mine a public affair. As to the information I gave you about the will you will, of course, see already that I took the only means I had of proving your disinterestedness; but in regard to the publicity, I meant it for a punishment of the absurd exclusiveness which, ill-grounded as it is, prevails in this neighbourhood. And tell,' she ended, turning towards me—'recommend those other pitiful members of your club to be careful next time that they do not blackball a gentleman.'

Miss Fanshawe did not go to Canada after all. I went instead, it being decided between us that this was the better course. I was so fortunate as to satisfy the guardian of her matrimonial interests; and I now occupy a position in the county very little inferior to that of the baronet. Nor have I cause to be jealous of him in any other respect, though my wife once confessed to me that there was a time when she did think him very good-looking; but she could not perceive that he had any other recommendatory point, and therefore she rejected the only man of the Saunterers for whom she ever felt anything like a fancy. That very select club was dissolved very soon after its young affections were so decidedly blighted by the present Mrs. Payne.

KRAVENS.

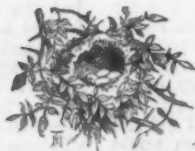
IN THE SOLENT.

‘OH the breath of the merry breeze!’
 The poet ecstatic sings,
 Secure on shore, of his crested seas;
 But two very different things—
 Lucretius hinted it long ago,—
 Are to see and to feel the Ocean’s flow.

Sweet to view is the silver sail
 Flecking the Solent’s tide
 With graceful swell to the gentle gale
 Seen from the pier of Ryde.
 All very well yon yacht to adore
 When you look on it safe from shore.

Pleasant to see at noon, or night
 When lamps from mast-heads glow,
 Myriads shedding their elf-like light
 Far on the waves below.
 As for the sea ’tis amply near
 Viewed as you view it from yonder pier.

Treachery lurks in the Solent’s tide,—
 Seek not to quit the pier,—
 Pain and anguish its wavelets hide
 Vide our yachtsmen here:
 ‘Snugly ashore how sweet to be!’
 Murmurs the amateur tar at sea.



A CAMPAIGN WITH THE MILITIA.

'Gentlemen, the toast I am about to propose needs no further comment from me. I give you the Army, the Navy, and the Volunteers.'—*Extract from the Speech of any Chairman at any Public Dinner.*

THE toast is duly responded to. That is to say, an officer, who has probably been in the service some thirty years before, says that he has very little to say, and is not sure of being able to say that, but is sure that the army will always do its duty; another officer, who is too old to remember such recent things as ironclads, assures the company that England's wooden walls are always ready to go anywhere and do anything; and a third officer, after apologising for the existence of the force to which he belongs, expresses an abject sense of his unfitness to serve in it, but hopes that the best of intentions will compensate for utter want of capacity in that indefinite period of a facetious future known as 'the hour of need.'

This is all very well, and just as it should be. But surely one branch of the service has been omitted in the apportionment of the honours of the evening. How about 'the constitutional force of the country,' of which we hear so much when the estimates are being discussed in Parliament, and so little at any other time? The Militia, if I mistake not, numbers eighty thousand men, and *did* number a hundred and twenty thousand before recent reductions. It is officered in proportion, has all necessary establishments, and is thoroughly effective for four weeks in the year, when it is placed on the same footing as the Line. Upon any emergency, or whenever the army needs strengthening, it may be made permanent, either wholly or in part, and sent to serve in any part of the United Kingdom. Should service abroad be required, regiments are invited to volunteer—which they mostly do with readiness—and then they may be despatched anywhere to take their share of duty with the Line.

One would think that a force like this would be considered sufficiently important to mention upon public occasions, where praise of the public

services is the business in hand. But apparently it is not; for only very rarely is an allusion made to it, and then usually for the simple reason that some prominent person present is found to owe his military rank to this branch of the Army. That the Militia is included in the Army when reference is made to the latter, may be supposed; but the intention is not generally understood, and a special tribute may well be claimed by the great Reserve Force of the country. The consequence of a long-continued course of neglect in this particular is that most people seem to have a very vague idea of what the Militia really is; They knew that there was such a military establishment during the long war which preceded the long peace, and they heard of it again when it was re-constituted at the call to arms in 1854. But many persons have a notion that it still exists principally upon paper, and that it is at its best but a holiday force, very remotely connected with utility. Only last year, the writer of a 'social leader' in a morning paper, in the course of some verbal embroidery upon the scene in St. James's Street on a levée day, made this remarkable announcement: 'Here too may be seen a number of fancy military costumes suggestive of Militia.' Fancy costumes indeed! The writer might surely have known that the uniform of the Militia is identical with that of the Line to a button—the only difference being that the lace and other ornaments are of silver instead of gold. We find too a not unfrequent sneer at the Militia that it 'does not fight'—as if the Militia could go out and fight whenever it felt inclined! Since the long peace the Militia has not been called upon to fight; but during the Crimean War and the Indian Mutinies a considerable portion of it was embodied, and did garrison duty in Ireland and in

Mediterranean stations, thus relieving regiments of the Line who were sent to the front. Moreover, if the Militia has seldom to fight *as* Militia, it is not unconnected with hostilities in connection with regular troops. Thus it numbers in its ranks a large proportion of old soldiers who have been, and young soldiers who will go, into the Line. Of its officers, too, many have served with the regulars, and many more would, in the event of a war, become part of the permanent force.

Of the future connection of the Militia with the regulars we may gain some idea from the working of the new scheme of the Militia reserve. Under this arrangement militiamen are engaged for five years to serve in the Line in the event of war breaking out during the period of their engagements, which may be renewed from time to time. The temptation of twenty shillings bounty, with the chances in favour of having nothing to do for it, did not tempt many men at first; but, as the conditions become better understood they are eagerly responding to the invitation; and I suspect that it will be found, when the results of the present training season are published, that in most regiments the full complement of volunteers (two hundred and fifty) have been obtained. If this be so we shall be in a good position to go to war at any time, despite further reductions in the Army, which are more than possible in these days of retrenchment.

Pending some sagacious suggestions for the improvement of the service which I intend to make presently, let us take a glance at the outward and visible signs of a twenty-eight days' training in the Militia, as exhibited, say, in one of the metropolitan regiments. I may best give you an idea of the salient points, perhaps, by citing the experiences of a young subaltern officer, fresh from his first year's exercise, and therefore, of course, a high authority upon the subject. I do not pretend to edit his communication, but will leave him to tell his tale in his own way.

* * *

I had no difficulty in getting my commission. Indeed, the lord-lieutenant of the county, who is a friend of my family, made me the offer of one upon very slight acquaintance. I thought at the time that he was stretching a point in my favour, and had a great respect for the high interest at my command, and looked upon myself as likely to become a spoiled child of fortune. But I have since had reason to believe that his lordship was very glad to get me. For Militia officers are not always easy to get in these days—that is to say, officers of proper social position. You could get plenty of cads, you know, who would jump at the idea of her Majesty's uniform, and be prepared to vote the Volunteers 'low' at very short notice. But these of course would not do—the line must be drawn somewhere. The Volunteer movement has had a great deal to do with the backwardness of Militia officers in coming forward, and something must be set down to the mania for efficiency, which, in these days, makes service in 'the constitutional force of the country' by no means a bed of roses. It was all very well when you could get in as a captain and had very little to do; but the first condition is now very rare, and the second has no existence. The consequence is that the subaltern ranks are insufficiently filled in many regiments, and I know of some in which they are nearly empty.

Thus it was that, finding myself really wanted, I modified my views as to the favour shown to me by the lord-lieutenant, and determined to patronise him rather than otherwise upon the first possible occasion. Meanwhile I accepted my rank of lieutenant with some affability, and, upon being attached to a battalion of Foot Guards for instruction, at once set about the task of becoming an ornament to the service.

I was attached, I say, to a battalion of Guards, but I saw little of the regiment and still less of its officers. After reporting myself personally to the adjutant, I found myself intrusted to the guidance of

the sergeant-major, who put a drill sergeant upon me; and under that intelligent non-commissioned officer I at once proceeded to drill. My instruction took place in the barrack-square, where I had an idea that the entire regiment would be paraded for my benefit. But the material at my disposal was confined to the defaulters, who, however, were sufficient in number for the purpose, and with whom I soon made good progress. The first initiation into the art of war is awfully discouraging, but I was spared the rudimentary trials which are experienced by professional officers. I was not drilled in the ranks—put to the goose-step, or anything of the kind—at least during my time with the Guards. The sergeant by my side in the first place showed me how to tell off and prove a company—that is to say, he told me the words of command, which I bawled out after him with considerable success. The men moved with such punctuality at my bidding, that I began to think something of the success must be due to my own proficiency, and about the third morning I fancied myself only a little short of being every inch a soldier. But I was soon undeceived upon this point; for whenever I tried to get on without the sergeant I got off in a most remarkable manner. The men must have known what I meant, but they took my orders *au pied de la lettre* in a most absurd manner. What nonsense it was, for instance, for them to move in subdivisions when they were quite aware that I intended to say sections, and to stand at ease with shouldered arms when anybody but idiots might know that they should first be brought to the order! But these are the trials to which young officers are subjected, owing to the dreadful want of intelligence which, I am sorry to say, prevails among the rank and file. Such, at least, were my reflections at the time—they are modified considerably now, when my prejudices are inclined to err, perhaps on the side of accuracy, and pipeclay has thoroughly entered into my soul.

By the end of the allotted month I had picked up something of the alphabet of the business, and with a far more modest idea of my own acquirements than I had entertained at the beginning, looked forward with anticipation to the time when I might become a moderately bad officer. I progressed at least sufficiently to obtain the necessary certificate entitling me to five shillings a day during the time when I had kindly consented to learn my duties, and meanwhile I had no further disbursement to make than that of ten shillings a week to the sergeant, so that I came off very well on the whole. It covered cabs at least, and almost amounted to gloves.

There was nothing more to do now until the training, a couple of months hence, and during the intervening time I availed myself of a *levée* day to get presented to my sovereign, and justify by my appearance her Majesty's trust in my courage and loyalty which she had so kindly expressed, by deputy, in the document constituting my commission in her service. For that document, by-the-way, the Court of Lieutenancy made me pay a guinea, but it was cheap at the price, considering the flattering terms in which I was mentioned.

In due time came the call to arms. A letter 'On her Majesty's Service' informed me that the regiment would assemble for the annual training on a certain Monday towards the end of April; and on that day accordingly I presented myself at head-quarters—much before the appointed ten o'clock—arrayed in all the subdued splendour of undress uniform.

On my route from the railway—which had brought me to a northern suburb of the metropolis—I thought some of the people proceeding in my direction remarkably civil; for they saluted me in military fashion, contrary to the custom of the majority of the passengers, who merely stared when they deigned to take any notice of me at all. The salutes I scrupulously returned, though not with too much eagerness, as I remembered Frank Mildmay's over-attention in this respect, and the im-

pression produced thereby that he intended to stand for the borough. I found, however, that my courtesy was not misplaced; for the men—very common-looking men, it must be confessed—who had bestowed upon me such flattering marks of respect turned out to belong to my own regiment. Like myself they were proceeding to join, but, unlike myself, they had not yet obtained the means of appearing in uniform.

They were an odd lot, indeed, as I saw them formed up in the barracks-square, falling into their respective companies as they arrived. Some were very respectably dressed—even as artisans might dress on a Sunday. Others looked like common labouring men, as indeed they were. Many had the slouching get-up peculiar to costermongers, as indeed they were also. Every kind of humble occupation seemed to be represented, and not wanting were appearances suggestive of no occupation at all. As they came up they answered to their names, which were put down by their respective sergeants. Some did so in a civilized, others in rather a savage manner; and a few were so much at their ease as to appear with pipes in their mouths—a proceeding of which they were made to see the impropriety in a very summary manner. For the rest they were all well behaved—if somewhat rough—and I did not notice any symptoms among them suggestive of premature beer, though such things are not unknown in the constitutional force of the country, in common with the Line.

A few officers had arrived before me, and the Adjutant, soon singling me out as a stranger, learned my name and introduced me to the rest—Adjutants, of course, are introduced by virtue of their office. So I was soon made at home, and furnished with much preliminary information concerning the regiment and the coming campaign. Most polite of all was the Colonel—so much so that I already imagined myself a favourite of his, and felt sure that my promotion would be rapid. The flattering idea in fact crossed my mind—should I become a spoiled child of fortune after all!

Our chat in the Officers' room was interrupted by a request to join our companies, which were by this time tolerably complete; and already great piles of boots and clothing were being brought from the quartermaster's stores for distribution among the men. I had by this time been posted to a company, and found myself the subaltern of one of the pleasantest fellows among my new acquaintances. I did not seem to be particularly required as yet, and confined myself to a vague superintendence principally expressed by looking on. The boots and the knapsacks containing the kits were distributed first. The process was easy enough as regarded the knapsacks, the names of the recipients being affixed thereto; but there were some changes and additions. All the company were present with the exception of three, one being returned as dead, another as being in custody of the civil power, and the third of whom no account could be given. (The latter, I may here mention, came up on the following day, or he would have been returned as a deserter; and being able to give a satisfactory reason for his absence escaped without punishment.) One man who came up sick was immediately sent into hospital. There were a few vacancies caused by the discharge of time-expired men, and their places were supplied by such of the new recruits as had seen service and were already fit for the ranks. Thus we had eighty-one effectives, whose names were duly called over by the sergeant. These were soon supplied with their kits; but the assignment of the boots was not such an easy matter. There are only four sizes, and the feet intended for them were in greater variety, so that the result was unsatisfactory in some cases. I noticed that the men were more particular about their boots than about any other article of dress; the boots being among the things that they retain as their own property when the training is over. When complaints were made it was generally on the score of excess in size; for the regulations on this score were intended for the Line, whereas

they are made to apply to the Militia, in which the standard of height is somewhat smaller. However, by a judicious process of approximate apportionment in the first instance, and individual negotiation in the second, the men were tolerably well fitted in the end, and some very successfully.

Jackets, summer 'trousers, and forage caps followed. These were as far as possible given to their former wearers; but the rule is difficult to observe—if only on account of changes in the *personnel* of the company, and the fact that new clothing falls due to some of the men. So there is a great deal of measuring and 'trying on'—the latter process being performed in a rough and ready manner, without the removal of the other garments. I did not notice that any of the men expected to get their former forage caps; as a rule they were content to come forward by turns, and make their selection from the heap which lay on the ground, growling a little when the sergeants dickered with them as to the fit, and occasionally making complaints thereupon to the officers. However, heads are more accommodating than feet in the constitutional force of the country, and they have the additional advantage that the men have not to march upon them. So the forage-cap question was soon settled, and the wearers were then in possession of their equipments for the day.

Some three hours or more were occupied in all these proceedings, and then, in a laudable spirit of inquiry, I asked my superior officer what was to be done next. 'Nothing but pay and dismisses,' was the reply; 'there will be no afternoon parade to-day; to-morrow there will be parade in jackets and forage caps, when the accoutrements, the tunics, and the other trousers will be given out; there will be a little drill here, and on Wednesday we shall have exercise in the field, all in proper order.'

'How much is the pay?' I asked—you see I knew nothing about such matters of detail as yet.

'The pay is one shilling and twopence a day—the twopence being

the latest addition made by a considerate government. But there are allowances besides—fourpence for lodging, and a penny for beer money, making one and sevenpence. Our practice is to pay eighteenpence a day—a shilling in the morning and sixpence in the afternoon—and two shillings on Saturdays, accounts being adjusted at the end of the training. When there is no afternoon parade the eighteenpence is of course paid in the morning; and to-day, being the first, the men get an additional tenpence each, ordained by prescription "for a hot meal."

'Do they get nothing more?'

'Oh, yes; they have a bounty of a pound on enlistment, half of which is paid on the spot, and they have a bounty of a pound a year besides—so that they receive six pounds bounty for the five years, and I need scarcely say the same over again if they reattest.'

'But why do you pay them twice a day?'

'Why, it's just a little safer; it prevents them from spending it all before the afternoon parade and coming up disconsolate, or perhaps'—he added, quietly—'not coming up at all. It's for *their* good, you know.'

The captain of a company is ordered to pay his men personally, but I suppose the practical object is attained by seeing the process performed by the sergeant—if not it ought to be. Our men are paid with all proper care, and as each man receives the welcome coins he goes about his business—or his pleasure, as the case may be—taking his traps with him.

Meanwhile we have not been without interruptions. More than once has been heard a bugle sound, since familiar enough, but at first nothing more to me than the idle wind in the respect that I regarded it not. But I was soon made aware that it meant something. It was the Officers' call, in fact; and whenever it was sounded we were expected to assemble round the Colonel on the square, or meet him in the barracks, as the case might be. For the commanding officer was busy all this time, you may be sure, and had much

to do in orderly-room and elsewhere. There were a few cases—'crimes' I found to be the professional term—to be dealt with among the men, and five hundred matters to be seen to besides. In the course of the arrangements he had something every now and then to say to the Officers, and these were summoned in the regular manner. The Sergeants' call is somewhat similar, and it was not immediately that I managed to distinguish between the two.

The communications thus made to us had reference principally to special points connected with our duties, but were not unconnected with exhortations connected with their general performance. The Militia service, we were assured, is not what it was. It is relied upon as a necessary auxiliary to the Army, and its thorough effectiveness is insisted upon by authority. A Militia regiment must in no way be inferior to a regiment of the Line, and every officer must perform his part towards the expected result. If we are rusty we must get the rust rubbed off, and make the best use of our time during the year so as to be up to the mark for the training. All this and a great deal more to similar effect was put to us in that genial tone of severity customary with commanding officers who practise true military deportment, and I am sure that it must have done us all good. For myself, though as a new subaltern not specially appealed to, I can answer for feeling a wiser and a better officer after each appeal.

The most personally interesting communication with the Colonel was when we were called together for a mess meeting. In this case our own comforts during the training were specially concerned, and we readily agreed to the usual means taken for insuring them. We were glad to learn that we had so good a balance—between four and five hundred pounds—at Cox's, and that a moderate subscription for the current year, increasing according to rank, would suffice for current expenses. I found, by-the-way, that I was expected to pay an entrance fee of ten pounds to the mess, which was a considerable proportion out

of twelve and sixpence a day, pay and allowances, which was all I was entitled to draw. But it was a comfort to know that the disbursement was for the common good, so I liked making it rather than otherwise. What is there in the moral atmosphere of the constitutional force of the country that makes one feel so benevolent?

All these important matters being adjusted we are free to depart, and lunch is the order of the day. The mess is held at the principal hotel in the neighbourhood, for we have no mess-house of our own, and efforts made towards procuring one have been as yet singularly unsuccessful. Voluntary contributions are ready enough, I am told, but they fail to find organisation, and so we go on drifting from year to year, waiting for happier times. However, we have very good rooms of our own, and the two pairs of colours with which they are decorated give them a professional air—which is something by way of consolation. As we have our own plate, glass, &c., and our own mess orderlies, we are well off as far as appointments and attendants go, so perhaps there is not much to complain of after all. I need scarcely add that we furnish our own wine.

You would not have known the barrack-square next morning without good reason to suppose it the same place. The uncouth garb worn by the men on the previous day had all disappeared. Not a fustian coat nor a felt hat was to be seen; corduroys were nowhere, and belcher neckerchiefs were conspicuous by their absence. The regimental jackets, trousers, and forage caps, whose distribution had given so much trouble, looked neat and presentable on their respective wearers, and even the boots appeared as if they belonged to the feet that bore them. The men themselves were clean and kempt, and some of them had even gone so far as to dispense with the tufts under their chins for which the promiscuous orders of society—if, in Parliamentary phrase, they will allow me to call them so—seem to regard with such affection. Their moral tone, too, had gone up wonderfully.

They were anybodies before, and conducted themselves accordingly; now they were soldiers unmistakably, and the fact was as evident in their bearing as in their dress. If you want to make an uneducated man a gentleman, there is nothing like making him a soldier to begin with: drill and discipline are a social education in themselves. Such was my profound reflection as I surveyed the men of my company—well, the company to which I belonged—upon parade; and I believe that I jumped at an opinion arrived at by far more experienced persons.

The commander of the company was a retired officer of the Indian Service. He was well up in his drill, as might be expected; but he made a few lapses here and there, suggestive of the land of the lotus and the palm, chillums and chillumchees, curree bhât and brandy panes. Thus he occasionally called the non-commissioned officers Havildars and Zemindars, which I believe the men believed to be terms of abuse—even as was the inoffensive parallelogram believed to be by the discomfited fish-wives. But the pay-sergeant at least understood him; for he was a man of four medals, and his services dated back beyond the days of Aliwal and Sobraon. For myself, I soon found that, as a subaltern officer, I had nothing to do—nothing at least that could not be done for me. I did not make the discovery immediately—not until after a few mornings in the field, by which time I had learned to despise the slothful life of the supernumerary rank, and to long for distinction in substantive command. I obtained this sooner than I had expected; for it happened that the captain of the company, for some inscrutable reason, obtained leave for the rest of the training, and there being no other Officer to supply his place, it devolved upon me to fill as I best could. Then it was that my troubles began. As a subaltern I enjoyed the proverbial reputation of the good woman who is never heard of, and incurred no reproach except occasionally, for being oblivious when there was

some absurd requirement for changing my flank, being late in saluting, and so forth. But the post of honour proved decidedly the post of danger; and, after a few days, during which I had gone the round of every conceivable blunder, I came to the conclusion that a man who can command a company can do anything. Commanding a mere battalion is nothing to it, as you need never be in a hurry, and at the worst can always fall back upon the Adjutant, who knows everything as a matter of course. The commander of a company may be sometimes saved in a similar manner by his sergeant; but that indispensable non-commissioned officer cannot always come to his aid, and the Captain must take care to know what he is about unless he wishes everything to go wrong.

These sagacious reflections are of course applicable to the Line as well as to the Militia; but in regiments of the Line there is always a complement of Officers, and none are placed in positions of command until after long training.

I was more fortunate than some subalterns who found themselves prematurely placed in positions of responsibility. There are no Ensigns now in the Militia, and if a Captain get leave—which some Captains have a remarkable talent for getting—the Lieutenant is the only officer left. Hitherto he has had next to nothing to do, as we have seen, except being occasionally deputed to inspect or prove the company. The duty of inspection, by-the-way, is easy enough, for it does not require much experience to see that the arms are in working condition, the belts and pouches properly pipe-clayed or polished, and the men generally neat and regular in their get-up; while he can at least manage the proving with the assistance of the sergeant. But he is apt to get into a flutter when he finds himself in command. There was Lightly, for instance. He was always in scrapes. His name was continually borne upon the breeze whenever we were out.

'Mr. Lightly, look to your covering,' bawls the Adjutant.

Poor Lightly is looking after his company, and in his anxiety to take it properly into square and say, 'Front turn, sections outwards,' at the proper moment, has drifted into an ingenious state of échelon with the officer marching in front of him. So he looks to his covering accordingly, and by the time this is set right one of the Majors rides up and reminds him of the next word of command, of which he is already aware, and the Colonel, who has an instinctive idea that he will forget, adds his own injunction to remember. The consequence is that Lightly loses his presence of mind and gives the order too soon, to the great confusion of the square—his own confusion not being diminished by the sarcastic comment of the Colonel, conveyed with all the force of that officer's vigorous lungs, that he is not fit to command a corporal's guard. After one or two mishaps of this kind comes a crisis not unfrequent in Lightly's essays at command.

'Mr. Lightly,' cries the Colonel, 'you can fall out. Sergeant Jones, take charge of No. — company.'

Poor Lightly feels abjectly humiliated—conscious as he is that the eyes and ears of Europe are upon him. But, after all—considering his very limited experience—the wonder is that he is not a worse Officer. His principal fault, I suspect, is that of being fluttry. There are others in the regiment who are no better, but they have an easy way of setting their mistakes right and making them less conspicuous. Larkins, for instance, treats the whole thing as a joke, and is ostentatiously defiant in many matters of detail. But I never notice that he gets either himself or his company into important scrapes. Perhaps he knows better than he chooses to let us suppose. In the service, as elsewhere, it is sometimes advantageous to pretend to a little incapacity; but this may be too well done, and it is rather a bore if you get people to believe you

Some of 'ours,' I am bound to say, are above suspicion on this score. Several have served in the Line, and others are quite competent for any service at an hour's notice.

The Colonel is an old soldier, and insists upon everything being done up to a service standard; and the rule is observed in all essential respects. The Adjutant, too, who is from the regulars, takes a high moral tone, and is seriously distressed at any want of seriousness, in matters of duty, among the junior officers, as savouring of a Volunteer spirit, which he regards with a holy horror. There are some of us, in the Militia as in the regulars, who take a social rather than a professional view of the service, and look upon dining and dancing as its final cause. These are useful in their way. They are sure to be upon the mess committee, and keep up the courtesies in the way of returning calls which some of us are apt to neglect. They are down for any number of guests on public nights, and are themselves the recipients of invitations from far and near. The local people, it must be said, pay great attention to the regiment, and dinners and dances, kettle-drums and croquet parties, are available on all sides. A particular set go in for such things; the remainder seem to run away from them, and dash into town as often as possible. A few, in fact, are seen but little with the regiment: and were there more Officers to supply their places, I suspect that they would not long remain attached. Among the social men are the few among us who are married, and have their wives with them at the training. It is due to them to say that they do not shirk their duties nor omit occasional attendance at mess, while they are always trying—with more or less success—to get up outside entertainments, and are further distinguished by the exercise of much domestic hospitality.

It must not be supposed that the Officers who are so fond of rushing into town are always bent upon pleasure. Several have professional or other avocations which they cannot altogether abandon, and to these some consideration is shown in the way of leave. Two of them have an erratic practice at the bar, and may be seen, at intervals of the training, in Parliamentary committee rooms

down at Westminster, their arms ceded to the toga—their war-paint cast aside for wig and gown. The change is a little embarrassing at first, as I was told by one of these legal warriors, who said that his instinct was to call the committee to attention before addressing them, and tell them off by subdivisions and sections, and that wishing to recall an inadvertent statement one day, he found himself bringing them back to the point by saying, 'as you were.'

The men, as you know, have many occupations. The most respectable among them make the best soldiers; they are quick, intelligent, well conducted, and give very little trouble. These are generally artisans of one kind or another, and some of them are so well-to-do that they ask as a favour to have their pay reserved for them until the end of the training. The larger proportion, however, have very miscellaneous occupations, or none at all. Besides costermongers there are a few dog-fanciers, and I have a suspicion that chimney-sweepers are not unrepresented among us. Of day-labourers there are a considerable number, and others seem to pick up a livelihood in any way they can. To those whose occupations demand the concession, occasional leave is given 'on private affairs.' The most poor are not always the most apparently grateful to the service which provides for them during at least a part of the year; but it is probable that they are never so well off as during the training; and after that, besides their pay, allowances, and bounty, they have the advantage of retaining their boots, two shirts, and two pairs of socks, as their private property. All of these articles being the best of their kind that can be made.

Among men of such varied pursuits some will necessarily make better soldiers than others; but all are up to a very fair standard, and, in this respect, the men of towns have considerable advantage over men of the country—they learn more quickly and retain more readily. They have plenty of drill

—morning and afternoon regularly, unless the weather be absolutely prohibitory—for time is short and efficiency imperative. For the rest the duties are such as belong to any regiment of the Line in country quarters. The commanders of companies are responsible, as we have seen, for the pay of their men, and have to keep a strict account with their pay-sergeants for the moneys which they disburse—being supplied with fifty pounds each, every week, on account of the estimate of the ultimate expense, which is very carefully made. They have also to keep the defaulters' book, and enter the 'crimes,' for which their men may be brought up to orderly-room, from the guard report, besides checking the ledger and the pay-sheet, and being responsible for their correctness. They have also, with the subalterns, to take their turn of orderly duty, and the Queen's regulations under this head are strictly observed. There is a Captain and subaltern appointed by rotation each day for this duty, and two officers, one of each rank, are 'in waiting'—that is to say, are held in readiness to take the duty in case of accident. Each Officer goes the rounds once by day and once by night—turning out and inspecting the guard, visiting the prisoners, if any, in the guard-room and cells, examining the sentinels in order to see that they know their orders, and also, during the day, visiting the hospitals in order to make sure that everything is as it should be. In the case of the prisoners and the hospital patients the Officer is expressly enjoined to ask if there are any complaints—as to treatment and so forth—and to notify the result in his next morning's report. Sometimes you get extra regulation answers to inquiries of the kind. Thus a sentry whom I was visiting, after reciting the bulk of his orders, concluded thus—

'—to salute all officers according to rank, and prevent the children from scratching the adjutant's carriage.'

The latter was of course an extraneous instruction given by the corporal of the guard, and related

to a newly-varnished brougham which was standing under the arms-shed.

A hospital patient, when I asked him if he had any complaints to make, replied—

‘Why, sir, Bill Simmons bin and hit me over the head with a pewter pot.’

As he was already being treated for the consequence of Bill Simmons’ exuberance of temper, there was no need to include *that* item in my report.

One of the least pleasant parts of the Officers’ duties—specially enjoined by the Queen’s regulations—is in these days enforced with great exactitude. This consists in being called into the Officers’ room from time to time, to be examined by the Colonel as to our knowledge of various points relating to drill and discipline. There is no escaping this catechism, which is not a little embarrassing to junior Officers, who, as they say, ‘know how to do things, but can’t say how they are done.’ The questions embrace a wide range. You are asked one minute, for instance, how you would form open column right in front, or line on the leading company; and the next you are interrogated as to the duties of a judge-advocate at courts-martial; presently you are required to state the pay and allowances of a corporal, or the price of the piece of sponge contained in a kit. The majority of us, it is right to say, answer most questions correctly; but others are reduced to make chance shots or a frank confession of ignorance. I have known such a thing as a very young Officer taking his seat as nearly as possible in rear of the Colonel, so as to avoid catching that officer’s eye—an abject expedient invented, I believe, in the Line. We are always glad when this ordeal is over, and we feel ourselves once more Officers and Gentlemen instead of small boys at school.

There are various phases in the training by which its progress is marked. The first week is one of settling down. The parades are regular after the first two days, but a great deal has to be done in the

way of interior organisation, and the mess is not quite what it will be. A few people have called, and a few have received invitations, but the festivities are not in full force. The second week is one of thorough work. The regiment is in excellent order, and is beginning to do its best on the ground; our visitors at the mess—when we have by this time made a note of the best wines—are increasing in number, and we are bidden to entertainments in the neighbourhood. The third week we are in our best form, as regards both our exercise and our social gatherings. The movements are executed with wonderful precision, and another stock has been ordered of that favourite dry champagne. About this time we learn the day fixed for the inspection, which is usually about the middle of the fourth week, and the knowledge gives a new impetus to everybody. Some new manœuvres are gone through on the field; there is a great deal of ‘mugging up’ from the ‘Field Exercise’ and the ‘Queen’s Regulations,’ in case of questions being asked; and long discussions take place as to the nature of the lunch—which is always made a feature upon such occasions—and the feasibility of further festivities. A couple of Officers who are going up for promotion become preternaturally diligent as the day of examination draws near; and their interviews with the little red books aforesaid are of a sustained character.

About this time—if it has not taken place before—there is a ‘marching order’ parade, and an inspection of kits by the commanding officer. The latter proceeding is gone through before the regiment leaves the barrack-yard. The rear rank of each company being faced about, the men deposit their knapsacks on the ground in front of them, open them, and display their contents in proper order.

The contents are not in proper order in the beginning, as you may suppose, and getting them into proper order is a work of time. At first sight it may seem somewhat absurd that there should be any regulation as to the distribution of

the various articles; but the object is to insure neat packing and the occupation of the smallest possible space, and without regulation this would not be secured. Neatness in such arrangements is not a spontaneous military virtue, and men if left to do as they pleased would please to stuff their 'things' in anyhow, and lose or leave behind them a great many of the said things into the bargain. To meet this failing it is enjoined that each article composing the kit shall occupy a certain relative position, departure from which shall on no account be permitted. The sergeants do the rough work in the enforcement of uniformity, under the supervision of the officers, whose moral influence is strong in the matter, and saves a great deal of disputing. There is a model kit somewhere, from which the rest are supposed to be copied, but the sergeants are apt to have ideas of their own, derived from the practice of the several line regiments in which they have served, and a little discrepancy is the consequence. Thus my company, as far as I know, is settling everything in its proper place. We are getting on very well, in fact. The spare trousers are folded up at the bottom of the knapsack; the spare shirt is rolled up on the right, the socks are placed next, and next to these come the towels. The remainder of the space is occupied by the four brushes—for boots, clothes, and hair—the little box of blacking, and the sponge. The jacket (in marching order the tunics are on the backs of the men) is folded up in front of the knapsack, with the forage cap (the shakos are on the heads) placed in front, and the hold-all, with its minor appurtenances, a little in rear of these, but in front of the knapsack. It is not very easy to make the men observant of arrangement. Some roll up the articles unceremoniously in very small compass; others display them as if they were meant to tempt purchasers in a shop-window. Both faults have to be amended. In the disposition of the brushes it is especially difficult to make them economists of space. They have an

inevitable tendency to place the two long brushes together and the two short ones in a line, whereas the junction of a short one with a long one just fills the vacant space, and is an obvious measure of economy. I, as well as the other company officers, have to enter into distressing details of this kind, and bring to bear all the experience which we have ever obtained in the packing of portmanteaus. I have nearly succeeded in obtaining uniformity, when it is found that the model kit, which nobody seems to have noticed for some time, differs in some prominent respects. So a great deal of the work has to be done over again. The front rank claims my first attention. Here, to begin with, I find the right flank man has packed his knapsack erroneously. I have to assure him that he has his towels in the wrong place, and that his shirt should be in the position occupied by his socks. As for his brushes, his blacking, and his sponge, they are all wild and wandering, so a general redistribution becomes necessary; and so on, man after man. But it is wonderful how they make up for misguided time when they know that the Colonel is coming round. There is always a difficulty about the hold-all. This little epitome of a dressing-case—similar to what is called in old-fashioned domestic circles a housewife—contains the knife, fork, spoon, razor, comb, button-brass, and shaving-brush. They should all be displayed in certain rotation, but men will be men, and I regret to see that several of these articles appear in improper places. You think you have just got them right; the front rank is quite correct, and you have gone round to see that the rear rank is equally up to the mark, when up comes the Adjutant, who is giving us the benefit of a preliminary supervision. 'Quite wrong,' he says; 'the button-brass and the comb should change places;' and the mandate thereupon goes up and down the line. You think you are right again, when another order is received from authority,—that the shaving-brush

should have its handle pointed towards the Officer. This is awful; the tendency of the shaving-brushes in my company is to have their handles towards the men, so another adjustment in both ranks becomes necessary. Everything seems right now, but we suddenly discover that in many instances the marks on the socks and towels are not displayed, as enjoined by regulation; so the erring articles are refolded, and after that the kits are surely *sans reproche*. Not so. Some of the forage caps are so laid that the devices or their fronts do not duly appear to the eye; so these have to be altered. After this everything is right except some of the shaving-brushes—the shaving-brushes always give trouble—which at the last moment are found to turn their bristles instead of their handles outwards. There is just time to prevent this insulting demonstration before the commanding officer comes round, when the company officer, calling the men to attention, conducts him with great gravity along the ranks. The eye of our Commandant is proverbial for seeing everything, but no grave deviation from decorum is noticed in my company; the only irregularity pointed out being the unnecessary display of two shirts and two pairs of socks by some of the men, the presumption being that they would be wearing some part of their regimental necessaries.

This important business being concluded, the knapsacks are closed, and deposited under the shed while we march out for exercise.

The Inspection comes in due course. Eleven o'clock is the time appointed, and precisely at that hour we are on the field ready to receive the Inspecting Officer—drawn up in line with shouldered arms, the Officers in front and at the port. Immediately upon his arrival there is a general salute, after which the Inspecting Officer rides along the line, accompanied by the Colonel, and makes his observations. After this comes manual and platoon exercise, and we are then put through a series of manoeuvres at his dictation; and then he calls upon the senior Cap-

tain to exercise the battalion. The senior Captain does not half like it, but he gets through his task very respectably, and after a sufficiently hard morning's work we march back to barracks. Here, in the barrack-square, follows an examination of the kits, which are fortunately in very good order, even the refractory shaving-brushes being in their places. This is succeeded by an investigation in the orderly-room of various matters relating to the interior economy of the regiment. There are some preliminary inquiries in which the regimental staff are concerned, and then the Officers of companies are called in by rotation to give an account of their commands. The books of each company are already deposited, as well as the books which each Officer is required to keep by him for his instruction and guidance. With the latter the Inspecting Officer does not much trouble himself; but if they were not there he would be sure to notice the fact. As the examination gets more stringent every year, there is naturally some anxiety felt on the part of those who have to encounter it; for they are liable to be asked all kinds of impertinent questions, ranging from battalion movements to the price of a pair of boots. We are sure at any rate to be made to show that we are able to keep the regimental books, and have kept them to the extent required; and it is strange indeed if we are not met with a variety of minor and unexpected inquiries. These we get through as we best can, and when we break down it is usually in reference to such matters as the prices of articles, in which, as we consider, the quartermaster is more concerned than ourselves. Prices, by-the-way, would be much more easily remembered if they seemed to us more important, and if they did not include so many ignoble details—so many twopence-halfpennys and penny-three-farthings tacked on to round sums. The opinion is quite at variance with all authority, but the general impression among us is that the most distinguished Officers in the service would be least likely to

possess such information—that we should fight just as well or better without it—and that details of the kind are the last thing that ought to be required of heroes.

Some of us escape more easily than others—owing as much to accident as any other cause—but we are all glad to bring our books away and to be rid of the ordeal.

Our trials, however, are not yet over. Theory is all very well to a certain extent, but practical tests are required; and some of us are ordered to exercise our companies independently. This is perhaps the least pleasant of all the proceedings; and of the Officers selected for the test there is not one, perhaps, who does himself justice. He may be quite fit for the work, but 'showing off' is quite a different matter, and he is apt to forget some of the things that he really knows best. However, the result is not unsatisfactory; and when the Inspecting Officer addresses the regiment collectively, it is in terms of high praise. He naturally remembers that the real proof of efficiency is what the battalion is able to do on the field, and not the individual cases in which he may catch officers tripping. This is, of course, apart from matters of interior economy, which are absolutely essential to discipline.

The duties of inspection used to be performed by Officers of the Guards, deputed, I know not upon what principle of selection, for the purpose. But since the Reserve Forces have been placed upon their present footing, the work has been done by Deputy Inspectors-General, who, in the presence of real responsibility, are far from taking things so easily as their predecessors. They are as courteous, however, as could be desired in their personal relations, and when invited to luncheon make themselves pleasantly at home. Our luncheon is already served at the mess, where, owing to the presence of an unusual number of ladies, there is such a muster as was never seen before; and the whole affair winds up with an afternoon dance—the band being specially retained for the purpose.

We have only a couple of days

more to disembody, and wind up our affairs for the season. Next morning, and on the following day, the clothing is taken back from the men, except in the case of those who have worn it sufficiently long to retain it as their own. The jackets and trousers, &c., I may here state, serve three years, and the tunics for five. The clothes thus acquired, I observe, are not carried away by the men. Several persons, more or less, apparently of the Jewish persuasion, have been haunting the barrack-yard during the process of recovery; and they make rapid bargains with the men who keep their clothes, which they—the Jewish gentlemen—carry away in bags. I am afraid that the clothes do not 'fetch' much; but the occasion is not very favourable to profitable conditions on the part of the vendor.

The men generally, reduced to their private apparel, present a very sorry appearance compared with their service array. But discipline has not been without its effect, and their deportment is very different from that which distinguished them on their first muster. Many, doubtless, would be glad to prolong their service, upon the easy terms of their month's training, and a large number have marked their military partialities by enlisting for the Militia Reserve—indeed we have more than the full complement of volunteers allowed us by law. But a considerable number are not apparently displeased to be rid of pipeclay; and I daresay—as Macaulay says of the Grub Street Bohemians of the last century—are as wedded to their desolate freedom as the wild ass of the desert. It seems to me, however, that they must resemble wild asses in more than one respect, if they prefer the hand-to-mouth life that many of them lead, to serving as soldiers under easy conditions, and with but few restraints except those entailed by a moderate degree of order and respectability.

The Officers of companies have no light task in the final payment and closing of accounts with their men; for each must be personally settled with, and made to sign his name

(or mark) in the ledger, and the signature of the Officer is appended to each account. Signing your name something more than eighty times at a sitting is in itself rather fatiguing work; and there are other forms to go through, including more signatures. Happy is the officer who has a sergeant who smooths the way for him, instead of giving him extra trouble—and on this score I have no cause for complaint.

There is no mess to-night; the waggon which may be seen coming into the barrack-yard late in the afternoon contains the mess plate and other property, which is to be deposited among the quartermaster's stores until next year. Those enthusiastic spirits among us who intend to make a festive farewell will dine together at a London club.

We separate on a Saturday; so there will be no more church-parade, as on the three preceding Sundays, when we have marched to church with the band in proper form, and monopolised considerable space within the edifice, to the confusion, I fear, of the congregation. The young ladies, perhaps, forgave us, but I will say nothing for the rest. Our training, you see, is, in practice, only for twenty-seven days; for the last week ends on a Sunday, and by sacrificing that, a day's pay throughout the Militia force is saved to our friend the British tax-payer.

You have heard of what manner of men our regiment is composed. They are—the majority of them at any rate—what most people would call a rough lot; but as soldiers they are equal to those which make up the majority of regiments of the Line; and I say this not only on my own authority, but on the authority of others who, let me modestly say, are better able to judge. And this, too, must be added in their favour—that during the entire training they have been wonderfully well conducted. Militia regiments have not the best reputation on this score; but if properly controlled there is no reason why they should not be as orderly as any other troops. You cannot expect to get men to settle down in

the course of four weeks into a thorough state of discipline; but they do settle down to a great extent, and more than answer expectation. As far as 'ours' is concerned, I can certify to the fact that, for a body composed of over eight hundred men, the cases in orderly-room have been few in number and of a very trifling kind. Of the general conduct of the men, indeed, there can be no better test than the opinion of the neighbourhood in which they have been quartered. This is greatly in their favour, and has even been publicly expressed.

I need add but little to the candid relation of my friend. The Militia is becoming better known and better understood than it was; and now that the policy is to reduce the Army, a still larger amount of attention will be bestowed upon the Reserve Force. People who 'know all about it' say that the service will be placed upon a better footing than the present; and I know that any shortcomings which may attach to it are not caused by want of attention on the part of authority. One of its chief requirements is a larger number of officers, and better provision for their training. It is true that they are afforded certain facilities for instruction before joining, or afterwards if they please, by being attached to Guards or Line regiments; but the instruction is not compulsory, and it is only for one month that they can put in a claim to the small allowance made to them on this score. It may be that gentlemen do not enter the Militia for the sake of pecuniary profit; but it is nevertheless not fair to expect them to perfect themselves in their duties at their own expense, and the annual training is insufficient for the purpose. It may be said that they will not give up more time than they do; but Volunteer officers give up a great deal of time, not only without pay, but with the accompaniment of considerable personal outlay. Indeed, the popularity of the Volunteer service has greatly interfered with the Militia; and stronger inducements than those which exist are wanting for gentle-

men to join the latter service. There are some drawbacks which are supposed to be insurmountable. Thus the four weeks' training must be gone through all at once, and with very little opportunity for attendance to private affairs; and the exercise, besides being incessant, takes place in the midst of the London season. There are two objections frequently urged: the first is said to lead many men who are in public employ, and do not care to spend their annual holiday at drill, to prefer the Volunteers; and the second—well the objection is easily understood as being entertained by many men who have otherwise a decent desire to serve their country. Two trainings in the year of a fortnight each would no doubt be popular with the Officers, but unless the regiments were more strictly localized than they are now there would be a difficulty in getting the men together, and even then these objections might be made on the ground of expense. The latter objection, however, would not apply were the permanent staffs of the regiments utilized all the year round instead of being maintained to do nothing for more than eleven months during that period. Any change, however, which would have the effect of shortening the trainings and making them more frequent, would be highly acceptable—certainly to Officers and probably to men. With regard to the time of year selected for the training the question is worth considering, whether the autumn instead of the spring would not be preferable—say immediately after the harvest. As a rule, our autumns are finer than our springs, and settled cold weather—when we have any—seldom sets in before Christmas.

As a rule, it may be supposed that officers enter the Militia because they like the duty. The service, with its present exigencies, certainly cannot attract those who are merely for playing at soldiers and shirking serious work. There are numbers of idle gentlemen who would crowd

into it were it as easy as the Volunteers, and care nothing about the cost. But the Militia demands in these days a thorough training on the part of its Officers; and those who have such training—Officers retired from the Line, for instance—are not always inclined to join *en amateur*, especially in the junior grades. In an embodied state—with pay going on for the entire year—a Militia regiment need never want efficient Officers. But embodiment for any lengthened time is rare; and in the meantime it is necessary to provide for the ordinary state of things. It becomes especially desirable, therefore, to offer existing Officers some additional inducement to increase their efficiency and maintain the standard when attained. The purpose would perhaps be served were they required to serve for one month every year with a regular regiment—the service to be divided, if desired, into two periods. It may be said that some would be unable to spare the additional time; but those who are best fitted for their duties do and must spare a great deal of time besides that occupied by the training, and it is to be supposed that they would not be worse off than before. For the rest, many Officers would be well content to undergo extra instruction, not at their own expense, but receiving the ordinary pay and allowances for the service—the latter of course being a necessary condition of the plan proposed. The hard work of the training, too, which meets with such frequent objection, would come far easier to Officers more familiar with their active duties than many are at present. For nothing makes drill more irksome than want of practice, which doubles all the difficulties and is fatal to that spirit of confidence which is half the battle in military training as in everything else. It is to be hoped that some provision of this kind will not be omitted in the changes which are said to be in contemplation for the improvement of the Militia Service.

RIDDLES OF LOVE.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE MANTONS AT HOME—NEWS FOR THE PEMBERTONS.

WHENCE had the necklace come, and what was to be done with it? These were the two questions which occupied May and her father on that night and the following morning. May had never given the captain any detailed account of her meeting with Cecil Halidame at the Shuttleton ball, but had only generally referred to the fact, after the scene at Richmond, that she had made his acquaintance at the mayor's. The captain had then entreated her—so earnestly, so solemnly—to hold no further communication with him that she had no resource but to promise, as far, at least, as any voluntary action on her part was concerned. She dared not now tell the nature of her suspicions, as she dreaded even the mention of Halidame's name to her father. And there was really no reason for doing so. The necklace was not Halidame's property, even though he had been its finder at the ball, and returning it to him was out of the question. Nor could any advantage be gained by obtaining an explanation of the delay in its restoration. So May contented herself by agreeing with her father that the ornament must have come from one of the mayor's guests, who had found it after her departure, and had, perhaps, only now discovered the owner. 'Though he might have advertised it, or left it with the mayor,' the captain remarked, not noticing the deep blush which the suggestion brought upon May's tell-tale face.

The necklace, in fact, belonged to May—or rather to Captain Pemberton, who had paid for it. But it would be only right, they both instinctively felt, to make Lucy acquainted with its restoration, as she would be probably glad to regain her lost ornament, notwithstanding the indifference she had formerly

manifested on the subject. So it was arranged that May should pay her friend a visit and tell her all about the occurrence.

'It would be only common gratitude,' said the captain, 'to make her a present of the thing; for it has brought us good fortune by bringing us to town. I am not much obliged to it for its share in taking you to the theatre; but that is all over, and we need care no more about it. But it has put me again in commission, and I was becoming a mere hulk at Shuttleton—of no use to anybody, including myself. Now I find, from letters received this morning, that our Indian expedition may be considered settled.'

May was charmed at the prospect, and, in her exuberance, was for returning the necklace to Lucy upon unconditional terms.

'Well, you have my full consent to do so,' said the captain; 'but she is scarcely likely to accept it.'

May went off to Mount Street that afternoon in the brougham which had taken Miss Mirabel on so many previous occasions—the rehearsals of course included—to the Imperial Theatre. She found her friend at home, by a fortunate chance, for Lucy had a great habit of being out during her present animated career in the metropolis. Mr. Manton had gone out to buy her some flowers and get a couple of stalls at one of the theatres; and Lucy, meantime, was playing with a new novel, and mentally engaged with a Maltese terrier. She meant the arrangement to be the reverse; but Lucy was not much of a reader and paid more attention to the dog than the book.

When May's name was announced—it was Miss Pemberton by this time, you may be sure—Lucy uttered an exclamation of delight and bounded into her friend's arms.

The Maltese terrier barked with all his might and knocked the book into the fender, where it brought down all the fire-irons. Nothing, in fact, could be more gratifying than the welcome.

'I am so delighted to see you!' cried Lucy, as soon as the fire-irons had concluded, and heedless of the fact that the Maltese terrier had possession of the house. 'Down, Bijou, down!'—and then, as soon as Bijou had been bullied and slapped into silence, she continued—'I was wondering when you would come. I could not go to you, of course, after the invitation you gave me to stay away. Oh, you sly thing!—who could have supposed that the daughter of the Doge should turn out to be my May? And now let me see how you look.' For which purpose Lucy retreated some paces and took an admirable survey of her friend. 'I can almost fancy I am *Forinù*, in the Inquisition scene. What is it he says? "Love is more than life, and dishonour is death to a Venetian!" Beautiful, was it not? But you, May—I beg your pardon, Miss Mirabel—astonished me. And Frank, too, admires you so much that I am almost jealous. You have come to stay, of course, so take off your things at once.'

Lucy was becoming a greater bore than Bijou—going on in this way. But May stopped her at last, and the two sat on the sofa and commenced a course of comparatively rational conversation.

'Do drop the theatre now, like a dear, and don't call me Miss Mirabel.'

Now that May had dropped the theatre herself she was as timid as if she had never made an appearance upon any stage.

'Well, I will, if you wish it; but it is not every day that one meets mild young ladies, whom one has not seen for a few months, converted into heroines, and all that.'

'I came to give you a surprise—to show you something; you will never guess what it is.'

And, hopeless of a solution of the question by otherwise than practical means, May opened the morocco-case she held in her hand, and disclosed its glittering contents.

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Lucy jumped with joy—literally jumped, with her feet, in a manner which would have scandalized the proprieties of Minerva House, and was certainly inappropriate to the dignity of a married lady.

'Oh, I am so pleased! But I do not want it back. Keep it. I have plenty of such things. There, I make you a present of it. But what nonsense I talk—it is yours already. Oh, I am more pleased than ever that you have found it. And how did you manage it?—tell me all about it.'

The 'all about it' was soon told; and then May added—

'But I have brought it for you, after all. Papa told me I might. It has brought us so much good fortune—that is to say its loss has—that it would be only a piece of poetic justice to restore it to its original owner; so I mean to make it a present to you.'

'Poetic justice is all very well; but it is expensive to practise when it costs hundreds of pounds.'

Lucy was a practical young lady, as young ladies who have fortunes in their own right and draw their own cheques are apt to be. She saw the transaction from the point of view of a bank parlour. May regarded it in an atmosphere of rose perfume, lit by moonlight, and sublimed with the sound of soft music. So there was a pretty little contest on the subject, such as, I am sorry to say, does not often happen in real life. And if May had not been so romantic, and Lucy so disgustingly rich, I dare say it would not have come to pass even in the present case.

The battle had just ended in the defeat, discomfiture, and final overthrow of May, when a rat-tat-ing was heard at the door. Lucy was seized with an idea, and immediately proceeded to put it into execution.

'That is Frank's knock. Go into the back drawing-room for a moment, and you may hear of something to your advantage.'

And, before May could ask the meaning of the movement, Lucy pushed her into the apartment in question, placed her on the music-stool before the open piano, and

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returned into the front room, leaving the door ajar.

Manton returned, with disgust depicted upon his usually happy countenance.

'Well,' said Lucy, 'what tickets have you brought?'

'A couple of stalls for the Octagon,' replied her husband, sullenly.

'I thought you would be too late for the Imperial. Never mind; you got some for another night, of course?'

'No, I have not. I was not too late at the Imperial, and there were plenty of places to be had. But the performance is changed. Here is the announcement circulated at the box-office.'

And Frank Manton read—

'In consequence of the serious indisposition of Miss Mirabel, the highly successful play of "Love and Liberty; or, the Daughter of the Doge," is withdrawn for a short time, its place being supplied by the favourite drama of domestic interest, "The Monkey of Ethiopia; or, the Devoted Wife," in which Miss Rosemary will sustain her original character of Finetta, the Ape Bride. Early application is necessary to secure places.'

'I thought you would not care to see that,' said Manton. 'It's as old as the hills, and all rot from beginning to end. But this is very unfortunate—Miss Mirabel's illness. The people who had come for seats were very indignant, and the general impression seemed to be that it was a swindle—that she was going to be married, or wanted to amuse herself out of town, at any rate. But I told them that the lady was incapable of any deception of the kind; and I'm afraid it's true. We ought to go and inquire; don't you think so?'

Lucy was amused and not a little puzzled.

'You seem to be very anxious about Miss Mirabel. Perhaps you had better go alone—I might be in the way,' she said, with a pettishness half assumed and half not.

'My pet, you surely will allow me, as one of the public, to take an interest in the best actress and the most beautiful girl on the stage!'

Here May, who could not help

hearing what passed, thought she had heard quite enough, and came forth from her retreat.

Lucy clapped her hands with delight on seeing her husband's astonishment.

'I wanted him to go into ecstasies about you,' she said to May; 'and so he would, I daresay, but for this awful bulletin about your health. But what does it mean?—why are you cheating the poor public, who have done nothing to deserve it?'

May took Lucy's little plot in good part, but she felt very indignant with Mr. Mandeville's excuse, making no allowance for that gentleman's position towards the public, who would have been highly incensed had any other reason been assigned, and would certainly have thrown the blame upon his shoulders. When an artiste leaves a manager very suddenly, it is usually supposed that he is mean, and will not give her money enough. They would never have believed the simple truth—that the new actress had changed her mind, and intended retiring from the stage after three nights of such enormous success as that of 'Love and Liberty; or, the Daughter of the Doge.'

Both Lucy and her husband were at first incredulous of the fact; and when thoroughly assured, the former, at least, found one consolation.

'We shall see so much more of you now,' she said to May. 'Actresses seem to have no time for their friends; and it will not be my fault if we do not get up some private theatricals. Ah! but I forgot—who will dare to play with you?'

May said she was afraid that they would not meet much for some time to come, as she would probably accompany her father to India very shortly.

'To India!' cried Lucy. 'Everybody's going to India. Cecil Halidame is going by next mail, and we may be going at any time. Frank's regiment will be one of the first, very likely. How nice it will be if we are all together there!'

Lucy's ideas of 'everybody'

were very limited; but the mention of one of the expectant travellers agitated May not a little. She was afraid to think what were her own feelings towards Halidame, but she naturally could not disregard her father's warning; and the return of the necklace—which she could not help connecting with the husband—added to the mystery which seemed to surround him. The latter occurrence, however, she was content to consider in his favour. It might be that he had kept the ornament in a romantic spirit of regard for her; and there are few ladies who would not consider such an indiscretion a fault in the right direction; while his sending it back was at any rate a sign that he had no wish to appropriate it to himself. Such were May's reflections upon Cecil Halidame's part in the transaction; and they show how important it is, in a doubtful case, to have a female advocate whose private partialities are in your favour.

May stayed that afternoon with the Mantons, but returned to Brompton Row to dine with her father. She found the captain in high spirits; for his Indian mission had that day been made secure, and he stood pledged to proceed to Calcutta in time for the commencement of the cold season. Sir Norman Halidame was also appointed one of the direction in India, and was to go out, if possible, at the same time.

CHAPTER XXXI.

MORE OF THE NECKLACE—A MYSTERY OF THE PAST.

The matter of the necklace, you may be sure, was duly discussed next day. Captain Pemberton was not nearly so much surprised as was his daughter at Lucy's refusal of the ornament. Indeed I may say that he was not surprised at all, he was evidently becoming a hard man of business. 'There is one course open to us,' said he, 'which I think would be a proper one—to offer the thing to the mayor, who may have an affection to it, and prefer it to the money which he has

received in compensation, which in the event of his acceptance will of course be returned.'

May acquiesced in this view of the case; so her father wrote to Mr. Cartwright, explained the new phase of the affair, and placed the necklace at that gentleman's disposal, with the necessary pecuniary condition. The promptitude of the reply was an example to all correspondents. Mr. Cartwright, by return of post, expressed himself to the effect that he considered his daughter rather than himself to be the person concerned, and as she had chosen to marry without his consent he did not consider himself bound to effect its restoration. If Captain Pemberton preferred the money to the necklace, he had better apply to Ensign Manton.

May thought the letter rather contemptuous, and did not like it at all. Captain Pemberton—he was certainly becoming a man of business—thought it natural enough, considering the quarter whence it came. 'What can you expect from people of the kind?' he said, with his old service contempt for self-made men, coming to London or Manchester, as the case might be, with three halfpence in their pockets, and so forth. Fortunately he did not want the money, and the ornament was just the kind of ornament that his daughter ought to have. 'Had I not lost my fortune and given up my active career in the service, my child, such things would have been yours long ago as a matter of course, and now, when I am regaining lost ground to some extent, you may fairly claim an adornment of the kind.'

'You allude,' said May, who had seldom ventured to evince curiosity as to the past—for she had experience of her father's repugnance to be questioned on the subject—'you allude to times of which I know nothing. I can remember little before Shuttleton. I have some faint memories of a ship, and being in charge of a black woman, who I suppose was a nurse, and still fainter memories of a bright, beautiful country with a warm air, which of course was India, since I was born

there. I can also remember—very faintly indeed—a beautiful lady who was white, and must have been my mother, only you would never tell me so, or indeed talk about her at all. I think, papa—father—I am old enough now to be told more concerning her. I know that she is dead, and that is all I know. I have never seen even her portrait—oh, I should so much like to see her portrait—to see if it is like a face I see sometimes in my dreams. You ought to show me her portrait, if you have one—and you must have one—why do you conceal it from me? There is some secret that you keep from me, and you cannot expect me to be contented in my ignorance, though for years past I have been obedient to what I believed to be your wishes upon the subject. My father, you must not expect that I can remain all my life satisfied to know no more of my family—of your family—than I can gain from my memories of a sunny land, a ship, a black nurse, and—of Shuttleton.'

May summed up her position with an energy that added to the evident confusion with which Captain Pemberton received her appeal.

'My dear May, my dear daughter,' said he, 'I was not prepared for your introduction of a very painful subject. I told you, years ago, that your mother was no more—no more to me or to you—and that there were reasons why I wished to avoid even the mention of her name. She was dear to me—dear as she can be to you in your fancy, even in your dreams—and I have had my fancies and my dreams for years past, and have not told them to man or to woman; and the tale to which they relate must not be told, even to you. You may know some day—perhaps through me—but you must not ask me now for painful revelations. You must be content to believe me when I tell you that your father's honour is unimpugned, that he has no fear even of the world's opinion, though he wishes to preserve a certain secret even from his daughter. But I am an old fool for talking in this romantic way'—here the conventional side of

the Captain's character asserted itself—'and what I have to say, May, once for all, is, that you must not question me on this subject. I have always done my duty towards you, and you must be, or ought to be, content with the assurance that, as regards your—your dead mother—my honour is unquestionable. Do you believe me, May, or do you not?'

May had not known her mother, but she knew her father well, and she threw herself into his arms.

'I do, I do believe you,' she cried; 'could anybody ever doubt your word? You have ever been to me what a father should be. I was wrong, I was wicked, to ask for more from you. It is only at times—after long intervals—that I think of the difference between me and other people—other girls—and now, when I have no longer the excitement of the theatre, I return to my old musings. But I will do so no more, and I ask your pardon for having forgotten myself and what is due to you.'

And May wept upon her father's shoulder; and her father forgave her with a strong protestation that he ought rather to forgive himself; but he had his reasons, as he said, for not telling May more, and restrained his emotions, as became a business man who was going out to the East in the interest of a company. So May restrained her emotions also, as became a dutiful daughter.

The next month was passed in preparations for their departure, but some 'urgent private affairs' detained Captain Pemberton beyond the anticipated time; so Sir Norman Halidame preceded instead of accompanied him by the first mail in October. As I have my reasons, as a chronicler, for following Sir Norman, I will leave the Pembrotons to make the journey at their leisure.

CHAPTER XXXII.

SIR NORMAN HALIDAME IN PARIS—A VISION IN THE BOIS DE BOULOGNE.

Asia is a pleasant place. Perhaps I am not paying proper attention to that important quarter of

the globe in giving it a mere topographical distinction; but our familiarity with far lands in these travelling times is apt to produce the proverbial effect of familiarity in general; and it seems almost as natural to talk of a man about Asia as of a man about town. Some of these days, I suppose, we shall be equally alighting in our reference to the planets, and even in these we have a celebrated authority for 'speaking disrespectfully of the equator.'

All I meant to say was that however pleasant Asia may be, we most of us, when bound in its direction, like to linger a little in Europe; and to account, therefore, for the fact that Sir Norman Halidame, in his journey to India, preferred the route *viâ* Marseilles to the route *viâ* Southampton.

The route *viâ* Marseilles naturally took him to Paris, and there he proposed to pass the two or three days that he had to spare. He had only two or three days, but they were sufficient for the occurrence of an important event in his life.

Sir Norman Halidame fell in love. He had fancied himself in love several times before; but he had always found his feminine preferences resolve themselves into matters of taste, and to be not very distinct from the sentiment which led him to admire fair flowers and fine pictures and graceful and beautiful things generally; to furnish his house with the luxuries of art, and even to bestow some care upon the apparelling of his own handsome person. For Sir Norman, though far from being a dandy, in the vulgar sense of the term—though the term, by the way, has *only* a vulgar sense—was not indifferent to the latter consideration, and regarded an ill-dressed man or woman in much the same light as an ill-dressed dinner; the one, in his idea, being as injurious to the moral health as the other is to the physical. His mental training, as evinced in such matters, had perhaps been a little too *fine*. But after all, as he had been heard to say, 'A certain attention to conventionalities saves a man at least from some kinds of

degradation. There have been great villains among fine gentlemen; but they are comparatively free from vice, and never commit crimes except when they happen to be heroes.' I daresay Sir Norman was wrong in his generalization; but he was an example in himself of the beneficial effect of conventional refinement, and it may be that but for his delicate love of beauty, fastidious taste, and sensitive temperament, he would have turned out a hero, and done a great deal of harm in the world. As it was, we find Sir Norman doing no worse than proceeding to India by way of intoxicated Paris instead of sober Southampton, and improving the occasion by falling in love.

It was with such a charming object, too. He saw her first driving in the Bois. He then thought that nobody had ever looked so well in a carriage; but when she alighted and walked, it was his serious belief that nobody had ever looked so well out of a carriage, in which latter conclusion he opened rather a wide field for competition. She was accompanied by a lady, whose apparent age would warrant the supposition that the relative positions of the pair were those of mother and daughter. Not that she looked old enough to experience a child of seventeen; but we must make allowance, of course, for the juvenile appearance of mothers of matured daughters in these days, when confessed elderly ladies seem to exist only in the imaginations of caricaturists.

The elder lady—I call her the elder in a strictly relative sense, as you would allude to the riper of a pair of peaches—was as beautiful in one way as the younger was beautiful in another. She was a beaming blonde, rich and ripe as a jargonelle pear, with an air when in repose that might have seemed languid were it not more evidently lazy, and with a form which might be accused of exuberance, but would be better described as characterized by a pleasant sufficiency. There was a happy good nature depicted in every trait, and the soft charm of her presence was nourishing to the eye.

The younger differed from her in every detail. Her hair was as dark as hair may be that distinctly refuses to be black; and her face was of that delicate fairness which is not ardent but essentially clear. Beneath her waved tresses it would irresistibly bring to your mind Macaulay's cabinet picture of

'April's ivory moonlight,
Beneath the chestnut shade.'

The epithet 'ivory,' by the way, has been challenged by critics who find no more poetry in the 'Lays of Ancient Rome' than music in the blast of a trumpet; but its value is recognised by those who have seen moonlight in the South—granting, of course, that they are competent to see, and not merely make use of their eyes.

Her features were finely chiselled, and perfect almost to a fault, and her brown orbs shone with a light that was perhaps too seldom subdued. There was such a radiance in her presence that you might expect to see her in the dark, and she gave you the idea of a gem rather than a flower. Her form was light and graceful, with all the charm of a transient immaturity.

If you do not now know what the two ladies were like, it is not my fault; but perhaps you may be assisted by the remark of a gentleman who stayed to speak to Sir Norman, as he stood watching the pair as they walked by the side of the lake:

'A fine picture, is it not? But they are by different masters. One looks like a Rubens, with the brush of Lawrence gently passed over her; the other as if she had been designed by Guido, and finished by Watteau.'

'Do spare us your definitions,' said Sir Norman. 'But they are a fine picture, as you say. They are both beautiful women, and the younger—'

Sir Norman paused; he had begun to think too seriously about the younger to talk about her.

'And what are you doing in Paris?' said he, still watching the ladies as they left the lake, re-

entered their carriage, and drove into the distance.

Sir Norman took not the remotest interest in the inquiry; but the reply aroused his attention.

'I am on my way to Marseilles—going to join my regiment in India.'

'Then we are well met. I am on my way to India, too. You go by this mail?'

'Must. I have exhausted worlds of leave, and then imagined new, but to no purpose. The Horse Guards expects every man to do his duty, and I have not done mine for two years, except a little at the dépôt, in the intervals of fresh applications. I am now at the end of my tether, unless I take to that last resort, studying at the Staff College; and after giving that alternative mature consideration, I have come to a virtuous determination to scorn the action.'

The ornament to Her Majesty's Service who thus delivered himself was a gentleman of some six or eight-and-twenty, whose appearance indicated the precision which he loved to impart to his language. There was precision in his quick eye and compact features, and even in the cut of his short hair. His dress was precision itself, and characterized by a strict accuracy in the minutest detail. His cheerful manner was conceived in a similar spirit. If he laughed it was because laughter was due to the matter in hand, and he would not refuse to the matter in hand that which belonged to it. He was incapable of being gloomy, and never allowed himself to be discomposed. His name was Milward, and he bore the rank of lieutenant in her Majesty's —th Regiment of Foot. How her Majesty's —th Regiment of Foot bore him I am unable to say, but he did not seem to run the risk of fatiguing that gallant corps by being too much with it.

Mr. Milward graciously agreed to dine with Sir Norman, upon the invitation of that gentleman, and the pair proceeded to the Boulevards for that purpose. Once or twice the conversation turned upon the ladies they had seen in the Bois; and one of them, I suspect, was

never absent from Sir Norman's thoughts. Milward was better able than the baronet to keep up the concert-pitch of conversation, having the advantage of being comparatively uninterested in the subject. But his admiration was strong enough to suggest a practical purpose; and he undertook to devote the next morning to finding out, if possible, the names of the fair strangers and their address in Paris. This was just what Sir Norman wanted to know, so he was rather glad than otherwise that he had asked Milward to dinner.

But Milward was not so clever or so fortunate as he had anticipated. The clue was too slight for a successful search. He found plenty of names in the lists at the hotels, and he heard of many ladies travelling with their daughters; he saw a great many strangers; but he learned nothing that could give him any indication of the ladies of the Bois, and after a whole morning spent in inquiries, he was obliged to return to Sir Norman with an account of his failure.

Sir Norman, not being so clever as his friend, had taken the best means of making the desired discovery. That is to say, he had visited all the most public places, in hopes of meeting the strangers by chance. He failed also; but he had better prospect of success. Meanwhile the departure of the mail was impending. Had Sir Norman been alone I suspect that he would have waited for the next steamer; or had Milward been a different person he would have still waited, and told him why. But Milward being Milward, Sir Norman could not muster courage for the confidence; his change of plan would have been denounced as too absurd. So after a hard struggle he departed with his decided friend.

*'Though I fly to Istanbul,
Athens holds my heart and soul.'*

Halidame did not make the quotation, for people never do make quotations when their hearts and souls are concerned; but he felt, when he took the train to Marseilles, that he was leaving all hope behind in Paris.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

VIA MARSEILLES.

Our two travellers, when they arrived on the following afternoon, found Marseilles full of overland passengers. Well, not exactly full, perhaps, for it would take a great many human shiploads to fill Marseilles. What I meant to say was that there were far more than usual; for one Peninsular and Oriental steamer had arrived from Alexandria just as another was leaving for that port, as will occasionally happen, and the homeward and outward people pervaded all the public places. The former were, as a general rule, older, and in by no means in such high spirits as the latter, and the first impression they created was that they wanted tailors; for the journey home is simplified in comparison with the journey out by the fact that nobody requires an outfit. On the contrary, indeed, you *cost* as much as possible, and bring away nothing in the shape of apparel that is not worth the trouble and expense, your baggage being always swelled beyond regulation limits by a crowd of miscellaneous articles that you wish to carry with you. The returning Indian is apt therefore to present a neglected appearance upon his arrival by no means consistent with his ordinary habits, and a rush to a tailor becomes the first necessity. Ladies, of course, always look beautiful on board ship as they do everywhere else, and P. and O. ladies will sometimes treat us to three or four toilettes in the course of the day.

Coming home is seldom so lively a proceeding as going out, albeit a great many of the passengers are very glad to get back, and abuse the land they have left in good set terms, as a great many of the homeward bound were doing upon this occasion. You may be always sure, however, that those who are most intolerant of the one country will be the least contented with the other when they arrive. Among the homewarders at the present time, for instance, was Major Mac Growler, an old acquaintance of Sir

Norman's, but a young man for a major, even as majors go, for the mutinies did wonderful things for some officers in the way of promotion. He has 'chucked up the service' in disgust, saying that he went out to command men, and not monkeys; that the natives, sir, are the most confounded set of lying niggers upon the face of the earth; that service in India is a state of purgatory, and life in the country under any conditions not to be endured; that bread and cheese and a crossing to sweep at home are enjoyable arrangements in comparison with the most luxurious living and the most lucrative employment in the gorgeous East, &c. &c. All this would be at least consistent if the major had always been of the same mind; but for some years of his military career he was enchanted with everything around him, concentrating his wrath upon 'his honourable masters' the Directors of the East India Company. Now it is only the country that is to blame. The Company was a glorious institution, sir; knew how to treat its servants, sir; and its abolition was, as he happens to know, nothing but an infamous conspiracy, and as gross a piece of parliamentary corruption as could be conceived. Nevertheless—though he is very hard upon the amalgamation measure, of which he has been one of the victims—he is thoroughly imbued with the kind of patriotism which will not admit that anything abroad can be so good as anything at home, and is prepared to land in England upon the best possible terms with the country. His enthusiasm will last for a few weeks, during which he will make a wild dash into London life, see everything that is to be seen and everybody that is to be known, partake with juvenile avidity of the most miscellaneous amusements, and eat oysters with an enthusiasm worthy of a better cause. Then he will do some field-sports in the country, if the season admits, and plume himself upon imbibing the true spirit of English life. All this—and a great deal more which he will manage to go through—will last

him, as I have said, for a few weeks. After that he will make the discovery that things at home are not quite so *coulour de rose* as he had supposed. He will miss his multiplicity of servants, and find that English domestics are, as Mr. Carlyle remarked of the population generally of Great Britain and Ireland, 'mostly fools.' He will miss his plurality of horses, and, looking at his limited resources in this respect, will decide that there is no place like India for horseflesh after all. Then his club will not content him, and he will take it into his head that he ought to have a bungalow somewhere in the neighbourhood of Piccadilly, where he could be independent and live like a gentleman. As for cookery in England, you will hear him say, they know nothing about it; and he will back a Bengal *bobachee* to beat the best of them hollow. Every minor discomfort—of which he will have an acquired an exaggerated sense—he will compare with the happy state of things at Calcutta, Delhi, Meerut, or still more distant Lahore, where, by Jove, sir, they all lived like princes. At the present time, when he is fresh from on board ship, he holds romantic notions of marrying the object of his future but not yet settled affections, a pure English girl, sir, with the bloom upon her cheek and no Indian airs about her. As his disillusionation approaches completion he will discover that there is not half the freedom and jollity about girls in England that he has experienced among girls in India, where, though they had a habit, to be sure, of preferring the civilians when it came to marriage, they were ten times the trumps at carrying on with the red jackets that they are at home, where, except in country quarters, an officer does not seem to have the common preference given to him which he has a right to expect! The fact is, he very probably finds—all through that confounded amalgamation, as he will tell you—that it is not convenient for him to marry unless the papa of his by this time realised and too settled affections will do something handsome, which the

papa very probably will not. So there is the bloom taken at once off things in general, and as a natural consequence passing discomforts become permanent privations. Servants are more stupid, dinners more flat, amusements more monotonous, society more insipid, and everything more unsatisfactory than before. He now abuses the home of his former admiration up hill and down dale, and laments again and again that he was such a fool as to 'chuck up' the 'finest service in the world' in its finest country. In this prospective state let us charitably leave him, rapidly becoming the bore of his club.

The outward bound, on the other hand, are all hilarity, except in the case of a few who are returning to India against their inclinations; officers perhaps who have been hardly used in the matter of leave, or merchants who are summoned out by bad accounts of business. The majority, however, are making the journey for the first time, and their hilariousness will give the tone to the social intercourse *en route*. The said tone will perhaps be a little loud at times; but overland travellers are privileged persons, and the few scrapes into which the younger among them may get are considered as matters of course.

Sir Norman Halidame and Mr. Milward, as you may suppose, were not likely to err conspicuously either on the one side or the other. They had both travelled the route before, and were not therefore open to novel sensations, while neither had been long enough in India to become Major Mac Growlers, even though arriving at that officer's state of mind were a necessary condition of protracted residence in the East. Sir Norman—if the truth must be told—was in a luxurious dream of the vision in the Bois de Boulogne, and was but dull company for the balanced Milward, who had his frailties, but treated them like sources of strength, and prided himself upon the possession of nerves like other men's sinews. He had not had occasion to bring these advantages to bear, except in small matters, for he had never been

thrown in the way of real trials; but material like his is excellent for any kind of dealings with the world, as far as the protection of the dealer is concerned. And Milward was, as you may guess, nothing of a hero, and in the game of life was content to play principally for safety. He had been himself much impressed by the vision of the Bois, but he was not quite sure which lady he admired most, and he was not the man to compromise himself rashly. So not being compromised, and the ladies being beyond the reach of his researches, he ceased to entertain them in his mind, except as agreeable contingencies that he would like to come to pass rather than otherwise.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ON BOARD THE 'EXUBERANT'— BREAKFAST.

The Peninsular and Oriental Company's steam-ship 'Exuberant' lay in the harbour awaiting the outward passengers, and our friends lost little time next morning in going on board. She was to weigh anchor at noon, and the bulk of the voyagers had taken up their quarters the night before, though they spent as much of the evening as possible on shore, as we have seen—disporting themselves among all the motley and polyglot people who always seem to be in a chronic state of arrival and departure at Marseilles, and visiting all those wonderful cafés where travellers from all parts of the world meet on the common ground of refreshment, and every third man is supposed by the inexperienced imagination to be a Monte Christo.

It was early in the morning when Sir Norman and Mr. Milward put off in a boat with their baggage to go on board the 'Exuberant,' which was a small steamer—one of a class employed before more recent arrangements, to convey the Marseilles passengers to Malta, where they joined the direct mail. There are always a few people who arrive the very last thing; but their time had not yet come, and it was only

when our friends had got half way to the ship that they observed a solitary boat following them.

They had reached the deck in safety, received their baggage, and made the necessary inquiries about a cabin, when the second boat came alongside.

The two gentlemen then did what any other two gentlemen would probably have done—that is to say, they leant over the bulwark to watch the new arrivals and assert their own superiority in being on board beforehand. But the first glance at the boat gave them an unexpected interest in its occupants. Sir Norman recognised them at once, and uttered an exclamation of joyful surprise. Milward, master of himself as usual, accepted the occurrence as a matter of course.

'They are the same people, no doubt,' he remarked; 'but there is no reason why they should not be going to India as well as ourselves.'

In a few minutes the persons of whom he spoke stood upon the deck. They were, indeed, as you have by this time anticipated, no less than the fair strangers of the Bois de Boulogne.

Sir Norman and Milward stood a little apart while the ladies saw their baggage safely deposited near that of the two gentlemen; but when they were presently engaged giving some directions to the maid by whom they were attended, Milward, under pretence of making a selection from his own effects, passed close by the other collection, and read the two names, repeated upon I am afraid to say how many trunks.

'MRS. BELTRAVERS,
' *Passenger,*
' CALCUTTA.'

'MISS BELTRAVERS,
' *Passenger,*
' CALCUTTA.'

As he did so the elder lady glanced at Sir Norman, who was standing alone, and a change came over her face. She turned pale, and showed signs of strong internal agitation. But recovering herself, as if by a great effort, she addressed her

daughter—it was evidently her daughter—saying that it was time to go below and see their cabins, and led her away.

As the ladies passed the baggage of the gentlemen they both saw the names thereon inscribed, and again was the elder lady's face marked by emotion. The fact, however, was unnoticed by Sir Norman, whose eyes were fixed upon the

'April's ivory moonlight,
Beneath the chestnut shade,'

which had been shining in his heart ever since he first beheld it beaming in the Bois de Boulogne.

Milward had by this time rejoined him.

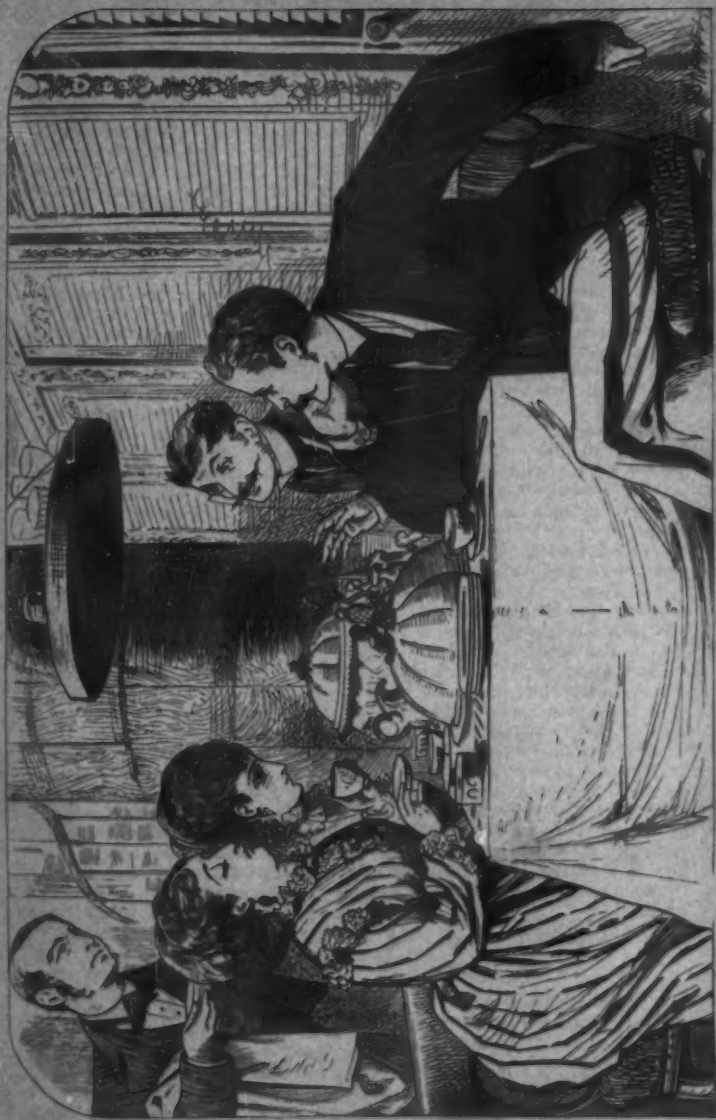
'Baggage on board ship,' remarked that gentleman, 'is the best master of the ceremonies possible. We are already as well acquainted with those lovely ladies as we could be had a common friend gone through the conventional formula—"Sir Norman Halidame and Mr. Milward, Mrs. Beltravers and Miss Beltravers," with the reverse arrangement of names which requires a master of the ceremonies for its observance.'

Sir Norman felt, since the ivory moonlight had left the deck, as if there had passed away a glory from the earth. But he was not so absurd as to say so to a man like Milward, so he carelessly rejoined—

'Well, we have their names, but I can't guess who they are.'

'For that we ought to be thankful,' said the complacent Milward, 'for we shall have the excitement of a mystery at any rate, and it may be the satisfaction of finding it out. In the meantime it may be as well to be early at breakfast, so that we may secure seats near the right people.'

Milward's precaution was not necessary, for when they were summoned to the meal shortly afterwards they found that the late comers, consisting only of themselves and the ladies, were—in the absence of special arrangements—assigned to the same end of the table—that the two couples were to sit opposite to each other, in fact, as if they had been a family party.



Drawn by Adelaide Claxton.]

RIDDLES OF LOVE

[See Chapter XXXIV.]

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Under these conditions conversation was not difficult, and a few minutes sufficed to establish a talking acquaintance. But two of the party were embarrassed, and said but little—Sir Norman because he was thinking a great deal and watching a certain person who was his *vis-à-vis* with anxious attention; while Mrs. Beltravers, for reasons, probably, of her own, that were not so apparent, regarded him with considerable curiosity. I need scarcely say that Mr. Milward was perfectly at his ease, and conducted himself with charming affability. Ignoring, with graceful indifference, the fact that Mrs. Beltravers seemed indisposed to be very communicative, he repeatedly asked her opinion upon the most indifferent subjects, volunteering his own most liberally in return. Finding, however, that it was not easy to gain reciprocity in that quarter, he had recourse to Miss Beltravers, and that young lady being more complaisant, a diagonal dialogue between the two was soon in a highly-flourishing condition.

‘Have you ever made the Overland journey?’ asked Milward, starting in orthodox style.

‘Once,’ was the answer.

‘Once each way, I suppose—an extensive experience for so young a lady.’

‘No, I only came home.’

‘Ah! then you were—then you belong to India?’

‘Yes, my father had estates there.’

The latter fact was mentioned with an air which seemed to convey that the possession of estates in India gave people a right to come into the world there, and that the young lady was not to be confounded with the *oi polloi* of ‘country-borne.’

‘And you remember the journey?’

‘Oh, yes, it was only three years ago.’

‘A pleasant trip, is it not? You are so well taken care of on board the P. and O. steamers, except that the fares are too large and the cabins too small, and the food is open to the charge of being bad, and the wine has been repeatedly convicted of being worse, and the

passengers generally all quarrel, and just when you think you could not possibly be more uncomfortable than you are, the ship gives a jump and you find yourself wrecked on a coral reef, and condemned for ten days to make common cause with cads, who take advantage of the danger to be familiar. But, for my part, I see no reason why a man should have a right to claim your acquaintance because he has met you, say, on a raft, or you have been drawn on shore together by the same hawser.’

‘Or are thrown together at the same breakfast table?’

This was said a little maliciously—in case, I suppose, that Mr. Milward should happen to mean what he said, though that gentleman spoke with great gravity, and betrayed no appearance of jesting. But Mr. Milward was not to be decomposed. Bowing deferentially he resumed—

‘There I admit you give me a fair hint, and did I suppose that I could be for a moment misunderstood I should immediately make an apology. But I was saying—there is no knowing what advantage objectionable people will take of you, in order to make your acquaintance. I remember a cad once who, at the risk of his own life, saved the life of a lord, so that he might get into his society. But the lord was too much for him. When he had quite recovered—he had been very nearly drowned—and the cad came to see how he was, his lordship said: “My good man, you did very well, did your duty to your neighbour, indeed, in a most proper manner. But the fact does not change the relations which we bear towards one another, and I must ask you not to call upon me again, except on business. If you have been out of pocket through the little service you rendered to me I shall be happy to reimburse you, or, should you be out of employment, I think I might promise you a place in the Excise. Let me know by letter what you would like—I shall be always happy to hear of your welfare—good morning.” Neat, was it not? The cad, I believe, was fool

enough to be offended. It was fortunate that he was not allowed to take the life he had saved, or I daresay he would have done so. And you are going all the way with us to Calcutta?' he added, with an air as if 'us' had chartered the ship, but would be happy to extend its accommodation to a limited number of presentable persons.

'Yes, we are going to Calcutta first, but eventually I think to the hills.'

'Then you stay in India?'

'I really do not know—you must ask mamma about our arrangements—they depend upon her.'

'Oh, I must "ask mamma," must I?'

Milward laid a little emphasis upon the words which he repeated, but without betraying Miss Beltravers into more than a little laugh.

Mamma, however, seemed about to reply without being asked; but Sir Norman, who had not appeared very tolerant of his friend's talk, and at the last remark looked a little indignant, diverted the subject of conversation by asking Mrs. Beltravers if he could be of any use to her in making her preliminary arrangements on board.

'Thank you,' returned that lady, composedly, 'our cabin is engaged beforehand, and I daresay my maid has by this time taken down as many things as we are allowed to put in it. The remainder will of course go into the hold. I am much obliged to you, and if any advantage should be taken of our unprotected condition'—Mrs. Beltravers did not say this very seriously—'I will ask for your aid. I think, by the way'—turning to her daughter—'we might go and see what Mary Jane is about.'

So the ladies rose, the gentlemen bowed, and the former left the table. As they were mounting the stairs leading from the saloon to the deck Mrs. Beltravers was heard to remark—

'I think that is the most disagreeable person I ever met in the whole course of my life.'

To which gentleman she referred did not appear; but her daughter seemed to know, for she answered—

'Do you think so?'

And the most enthusiastic cavedropper, unless he had followed them upon deck, could have heard no more.

CHAPTER XXXV.

BETWEEN MARSEILLES AND MALTA.

Halidame had half a mind to quarrel with Milward for what he considered the impertinent tone of that gentleman's conversation towards their new acquaintances. But his claims to the position of a champion were not indisputable, and he saw that some ridicule might be attached to the assumption. Moreover, his sensibility dreaded anything like a 'scene,' especially when certain persons were concerned; and then, too, it was easier to say nothing than to interfere. So, between one consideration and another, Sir Norman did not express his annoyance, and allowed Milward to disport himself as he pleased upon the prospect of having such charming fellow-passengers on their journey. I believe that gentleman was under the serious impression that he had made a decided conquest of one or both of them, by his engaging manners and amiable criticisms upon men and things.

An important event soon diverted everybody from other considerations. The 'Exuberant' weighed anchor, steamed out of the harbour, and was soon in the open sea.

The open sea was a great check upon the imagination of most of the passengers, who were not many in number, by the way, for the majority of the outward bound had proceeded by Southampton, and so saved themselves the extra trouble incident to the route *via* Marseilles. As the 'Exuberant' began to bound over the billows under the influence of a fresh breeze, one by one disappeared from the deck, and were not to be found either in the saloon. Mrs. and Miss Beltravers were not among the number, for they had been invisible since breakfast, and by their seclusion gave bitter disappointment to those of their fellow-

passengers who were well enough to have enjoyed staring themselves into acquaintanceship.

A few of these were discussing their cigars on the quarter-deck and lamenting the threatened bad weather, when they were joined by Milward, who recognised a man he knew in the group. The two were soon engaged in conversation. His friend was many years his senior, but Milward did not address him with any kind of deference on that account.

'Why, Juteley, my boy, you are the last man I should have expected to see going out, for the reason that you are the last man I should have expected to see coming home. I thought you were wedded to Calcutta, wrapped up in grey shirtings, mule twist, and all those mysterious things out of which you have made so many fortunes.'

'And lost them, you might have added. Yes, after forty years of Calcutta, I thought I would give Europe a turn.'

'Do the civil thing, eh?'

'Yes, if you like to put it so. At any rate I thought it as well to have some idea of England—of London, especially—having only the vaguest remembrance of what they call "home." So I gave myself leave of absence for six months, and have had quite enough of the place during the three months I passed in it. Everything looked so ugly, dirty, and dwarfed, that it made me melancholy. And the atmosphere! It makes a man feel as if he had committed a murder, and had a suicide constantly on the cards. Nothing will ever make me believe that the sun is the same as that we see in India—nor the moon either—and as for the stars, they have clearly no connection with the Calcutta branch of the astronomical firm. As for the living—you can get good dinners, no doubt, but I will back Calcutta cookery against English any day, and we have a few special things, such as the mango-fish, which can't be matched in Europe; while in wine we can go to the same markets, of course. I couldn't stand the little houses you live in, and the coat of horses, and,

above all, the people you meet about, whose careworn existence is depicted in their faces. I am glad I have been home, however, for the experience will settle me in India, and I shall never wish to leave it again.'

'You forty-years'-men always talk in that way. Perhaps if you had come home thirty years ago, you would have formed a different opinion.'

Milward, you see, was not disposed to allow Mr. Juteley to be too contented.

'*Apropos* of Calcutta,' he added, presently, 'you ought to know all about everybody who has ever lived there within something short of half a century. Do you happen to know anything about some people named Beltravers?'

'You can scarcely mean Calcutta itself,' was the answer. 'There has never been a Beltravers living there, but there was one in a Mofussil station, who used to come in now and then. I had no acquaintance with him, but I know him well by repute. He was an indigo planter, and immensely rich. I say *was*, because he died about three years ago.'

'Did he leave any family?'

'Yes, a widow and an only daughter. They went home soon after his death, and I have heard nothing of them since. Indeed, it was only when they came to Calcutta to embark that I heard of them at all. But why do you ask? Are you interested in their whereabouts?'

'Well, I don't know; or, if you like—yes. They are on board here—no doubt the same people—and I am interested to this extent. They are both very beautiful women—one of them being only a girl.'

'Yes, I heard that the mother was handsome, but I never saw her; and I suppose the girl when in India was too young to be included in the local *gossip*.'

'I daresay—she cannot be more than seventeen or so now; and then years make a great deal of difference at that time of life. They are very rich, you say?'

'Beltravers was one of the weal-

thiest men in Bengal; and they must be as rich as he, if he left them his money, which I suppose he did, as I never heard of any other members of the family.'

'You came on board late, I think, for I did not see you at breakfast. Had you been there, you could not fail to have remarked the two ladies who sat opposite to us—I mean myself and my friend Sir Norman Halidame.'

'Halidame—Halidame,' said Mr. Juteley, in a musing manner; 'I know that name. There was some scandal connected with him in Calcutta, some ten or twelve years ago.'

'Yes; I heard something about it in India. Halidame is said to have had an intrigue with somebody else's wife—got into a little scrape, but got out of it again, as a great many men have done before him,' added Milward, taking a charitable view of the transaction. Milward could be charitable, it seems, about people getting into scrapes—when they happened also to get out of them.

Here the conversation dropped. It had been conducted not without some difficulty; for the still rising wind was 'dead on end,' and the weather was of the kind that sailors call 'dirty.'

'We shall have a disgusting passage,' remarked Milward; 'but, fortunately, it cannot last long, unless we get a regular gale.'

The weather, however, did not threaten to go to this extreme. It was a little better by dinner-time, and several ladies appeared for that meal. Among them were Mrs. and Miss Beltravers, who looked quite unruffled and serene in a calm indifference to the elements.

Sir Norman had not been among those whom the weather had placed *hors de combat*; and he would have joined the hardy party upon deck, probably, had his mind been sufficiently disengaged. As it was, he had amused himself, or pretended to amuse himself, with a book in the saloon. But he had an odd way of reading upon this occasion, not calculated for the mastery even of a novel. How can a man take an in-

telligent interest in the fortunes of fictitious personages when real personages occupy his mind and he is bent on beholding them? Sir Norman seemed so much engaged in watching certain cabin-doors, that it is doubtful whether he did justice to the popular author upon whose work he was engaged; and I suspect that he would not have cared much had the heroine been found out in the murder as well as the bigamy, and been hanged out of hand, instead of confusing her enemies, condoning with her conscience, and living very happily ever afterwards.

It was only at dinner that he received the satisfaction he sought; and then he was delighted to find that the ladies whose presence he awaited were so undisturbed by the rough weather. They seated themselves in the places previously assigned to them, and were most gracious in their salutations; and these were exclusively rendered to Halidame, for Mr. Milward had not made his appearance at the time. When he did vouchsafe that honour they were a little more constrained. It seemed that Milward had already accomplished the usual result of his social endeavours—that of taking up a position considerably removed from that of first favourite in the race.

The unfavourable impression, however, was more evinced on the part of Mrs. Beltravers than on that of her daughter. The elderly lady put him down with some decision whenever he ventured out of the range of good-natured conventionality; but the younger, as conversation advanced, encouraged him so far as to show herself not unamused sometimes at his cynical remarks. I daresay she had her own reasons for this complaisance; but, whatever they were, the result was not agreeable to Halidame, who found Milward more in his way than ever. He was piqued, too, that Miss Beltravers should ever—as she occasionally did—neglect him in order to listen to observations which, in his opinion, were not calculated to charm the listener as models of good taste. I suspect he showed

his annoyance, and that Miss Beltravers was flattered by the sign; for before dinner was over her gaiety had risen greatly, and she wore an air of radiant triumph which, Hall-dame remarked, with some sadness, made her look even more beautiful than before. For Miss Beltravers' face was least effective in repose. When she occasionally leaned back in her chair, as if disposed neither to talk nor to listen, the fact became observable that her features were too perfect, like those we see on some ancient sculpture, conveying an abstract rather than an individual idea of beauty. The distinction was lost, however, on Sir Norman, who was under the influence of a foregone conclusion; and even had his criticism extended so far, would not have been disposed to quarrel with perfection for being too perfect.

It is well, perhaps, that Sir Norman was incapable of forming a disinterested judgment, or he might have been led to form a suspicion that Miss Beltravers was just a trifle of a coquette.

The two ladies disappeared after dinner, and sought the shelter of their cabin, where, Miss Beltravers said, she had a novel to read which interested her more than any society. The few other ladies on board soon followed their example; for the saloon was cold and cheerless, and going on deck to enjoy the little remaining daylight was out of the question; for the wind, which had changed its quarter and considerably subsided, was succeeded by a heavy rain which lasted all the evening. Even tea, which came on at seven o'clock, did not draw them from their retirement, though you

may guess that they were not without that feminine consolation in their private quarters. So, left entirely to themselves, the men drew as near to the stove as possible, and, having made a few parties at cards, relieved the monotony of losing or winning money by refreshment somewhat stronger than tea, taken in tumblers, until the decanters were ruthlessly removed by strong-minded stewards, in acknowledgment of the hour of ten, when the lights were extinguished and everybody was expected to be at rest. The question how far rest was probable, in some cases, did not enter into the scope of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's regulations.

The second day was as dreary as the first as far as the weather was concerned, and our four friends passed the time in much the same manner as the day before. The ladies appeared but little except at breakfast and dinner, and the gentlemen did not make much advance into their acquaintanceship. The little change observable was in the direction already taken. Thus, Mrs. Beltravers was greatly courteous to Sir Norman, and scarcely concealed her dislike to Mr. Milward; while Miss Beltravers was more tolerant, and, while not quite neglecting the baronet, encouraged his friend in his favourite style of development, and made him more aggressive than he would otherwise have been—to Sir Norman's increased disgust.

There was a growing coolness between the two gentlemen by the time the 'Exuberant' arrived at Malta, on the morning of the third day after leaving Marseilles.



THE OLD HOUSE BY THE RIVER.

A Long Vacation Romance.

CHAPTER I.

'YOU ought to be uncommonly lucky in your wife, George Seaforth,' said my friend Everard to me one morning as we sat at breakfast together in my rooms at Oxford, 'for upon my word you are the most unlucky beggar at cards I ever knew.'

'Ah, you are thinking of last night.'

'Not only last night, but every night. You always lose at any game of chance. You go upon a system, I believe.'

'You will do me the justice, my dear fellow, to admit that I seem perfectly aware of my ill luck, and never hazard much.'

'Well, that's true enough, fortunately for you. I am bound to say you seem to take an interest in Van John only for the sake of society.'

'My bad luck goes beyond Van, I believe, in every game of chance, as you observed just now; there is not such a luckless creature in all England as myself.'

'Then, to return to my first remark—if there is any truth in proverbs—you ought to be uncommonly lucky in your wife.'

Wife, indeed! Such a subject never occupied my thoughts. I knew quite well that love was a luxury I could not afford, and as to my ever marrying a rich wife, I thought that would be a destiny simply less tolerable than marrying a poor one. And so I told Everard. To which he replied simply, 'Pooh—nonsense.'

It was just the end of term, and the beginning of the long vacation, and I was contemplating, not without regret, my parting, for good and all, from Oxford. I am not prepared to say that I had found university life entirely paradisaical; on the contrary, I had taken my degree at as early a date as I possibly could, under the not unnatural impression that I should be very glad to be a little more inde-

pendent. College discipline, I admit, was not strikingly severe; but I am afraid I rather objected to any discipline at all. An ill-regulated mind was mine, no doubt, but there it was, and all I could do was to make the best of it.

'What are you going to do this Long, George?' asked Everard.

'I am going north to-morrow in order to visit an aged aunt—about the only relation I have got in the world, I believe; and when I have done my duty there for ten days or a fortnight, I mean to go abroad, and lay in a stock of air and exercise previous to settling down in chambers in the Temple.'

'Going abroad, eh? Ah! then perhaps you will accomplish your inevitable destiny in some romantic spot. You will find a beautiful young lady with no end of dollars who will compensate you for your three years' run of bad luck at Oxford.'

'My dear Everard, it is lucky I am not so impressionable as you are, or I have no doubt, after what you have said, I should be always thinking of this beautiful golden young lady. As it is, you know my worst enemy could never say that I was a spoony sort of fellow, and I don't think I am very likely to fall a victim to wealth and loveliness without a struggle. Come, I tell you what; if I pick up an enormous heiress without youth and beauty, I'll undertake to pay your Oxford debts.'

'Then be off on your travels at once, my generous friend. Plunge into the vortex of society, rush madly to the Swiss lakes, the Italian lakes, any other lakes you may prefer; give yourself a fair chance, and I shall spend a happy Christmas.'

During this day I had occasion to call myself an ass and an idiot a great number of times, for I caught myself continually thinking about what Everard had said. What a fool I was to allow such nonsense

to remain in my head! As a sufficient refutation of his absurd idea, I considered how that the commemoration, which was just over, had been unusually gay; there had been heaps of pretty girls, and not a few heiresses at the balls—if rumour might be trusted—but where was my good luck all the time? Not perceptible to me, certainly.

Though I was in a good college, and moved in the best set, nobody knew anything about me, except that I was a comparatively poor man; and mothers and chaperones did not seem enthusiastic about my dancing with their several young ladies. Bosh! humbug! let me go down to —shire to-morrow and enjoy my existence by the side of an admirable trout stream I was well acquainted with in the neighbourhood of my aunt's house.

'Unlucky at cards, lucky in a wife.' Confound the words! why I was always repeating them to myself. Of course I had heard the proverb a hundred times before; why in the world should it take such ridiculous possession of my mind now? Ah! I saw how it was; I had been reading too hard for the final schools, and my head, not impossibly, was in a slightly puzzled condition. Landing a few good fish would very soon put that to rights. That reminded me I was not usually an unlucky fisherman; I wondered if that fact would in any way upset—pshaw—there I was off again.'

I did not see Everard again that day: he came up to my rooms to say good-bye, as he was 'going down' that evening; but not finding me, he had written on a slip of paper, 'Good-bye, old fellow, sorry not to see you. Perhaps we may meet on the continent. By-the-by, I have run up another tick or two in anticipation of the Christmas settlement. Thine ever, TOM EVERARD.'

What an absurd fellow! Of course, he could not believe his own nonsense. He could not believe seriously that there was any truth in the proverb, 'Unlucky at cards'—Pish! there I was again.

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I believe I was almost the only man left in college that evening. Every one had 'gone down,' with the exception of a few Dons, and one or two old Fellows, who stuck to their rooms like learned barnacles, and utterly declined to mingle with an uninstructed world. I had a good many final arrangements to make, and so was pretty well occupied till after dinner. Then, having smoked one peaceful cigar, I set to work to pack my portmanteau, and called out to my scout to come and assist me. That willing help speedily appeared.

Turning over a multitude of things, a pack of cards made a thumbd appearance.

'Charles,' said I, sententiously, 'never you touch cards.'

'Never do now, sir,' was the prompt reply. 'Did at one time, but they never agreed with me.'

'How do you mean?'

'Always was agin me, sir. Never played for a sixpence at beggar-my-neighbour but what I lost. When I married, I give 'em up entirely.'

'Why?' I demanded, with rising curiosity.

'Well, sir, you see I wasn't lucky with them. But I was lucky enough to get an uncommon good wife, and I never touched a card since.'

'Ah! I see—to be sure—pack away, Charles.'

There it was again; but there seemed to be something in it this time. Really, proverbs might be true, it would seem. Philosophically, now, could this be accounted for rationally? Of course it could, it was merely a coincidence. But when the willing Charles had departed, I half determined I would consider the question deeply when I got down to —shire, and, if necessary, write an interesting paper on the subject.

All humbug, thought I, the next morning when I awoke early, the sun shining gloriously into my bedroom. Three-and-twenty, and the 'lawless science of the law' stretching into hopeless space before me. What have I to do with love-making or wives? Away with such slight things!

Twenty years ago, when I left Oxford, railways were not quite so obliging as they are now, and my aunt's house in —shire was nearly fifteen miles from the nearest railway station. For this welcome drive after a long and dusty railway journey, I managed to procure a dog-cart, with a tolerable horse, and rattled merrily along the valley in the delicious cool of a glorious summer evening.

I must own it. I did wish rather that there was somebody to welcome me besides my good old aunt. How delightful it would be if I might only hope to find at Daylesford some fair young creature who would accompany me on my angling excursions, or meet me at noon with the thrice welcome luncheon. I was quite astonished at myself for entertaining this notion; but I entertained it none the less. In fact, I thought about it so much, that I began to fancy it must be a sweet presentiment, and I certainly experienced something in the nature of a pang of disappointment when I looked in vain for signs of any fair form on the lawn or in the garden as I drove up.

No; it was all the same as usual. My aunt, of course, somewhat older, and perhaps a trifle deaf. I was evidently destined to find the events of this visit much the same as on previous occasions.

The dear old lady was always delighted when I came to see her, but this time she had evidently been looking forward most eagerly to my visit. 'It may be the last, George, it may be the last. I have run my threescore years and ten, my dear boy, and I don't think I am so strong as to come to fourscore.'

'I think you are looking as hearty and cheerful as ever, aunt. I don't say it as a compliment, for I really mean it.'

'Ah! I feel my strength pretty much as I have felt it for the last five years, but I feel too that it must give way altogether soon. 'Tis your last visit, George; I know it is. You have been a kind, good boy to me, but I don't think I shall ever trouble you to come so far north again to see me.'

'Now, my dear aunt, I am not going to allow you to talk like this. You know you are under a solemn promise to dance at my wedding, and I am sure that won't be just yet.'

A kind smile lit up her venerable face as she answered:

'I have often thought of your marriage, George. Perhaps it may not be as far off as you think.'

('Unlucky at cards,' &c., was back again in my head in an instant.)

'My dear aunt, what can make you suggest such a thing? I have often told you, when you have asked me what pretty young ladies I have seen lately, that I am not a ladies' man—least of all, a marrying man.'

Suddenly the smile died upon her lips, and an exceeding pallor overspread her countenance. She passed her hand tremulously across her forehead, and then said, in a hollow, troubled voice:

'But there's somebody waiting for you, George. Somebody keeps coming and going—looking for you, I am sure.'

No wonder this piece of information, so delivered, rather startled me at first. Were my aunt's faculties indeed beginning to fail her?

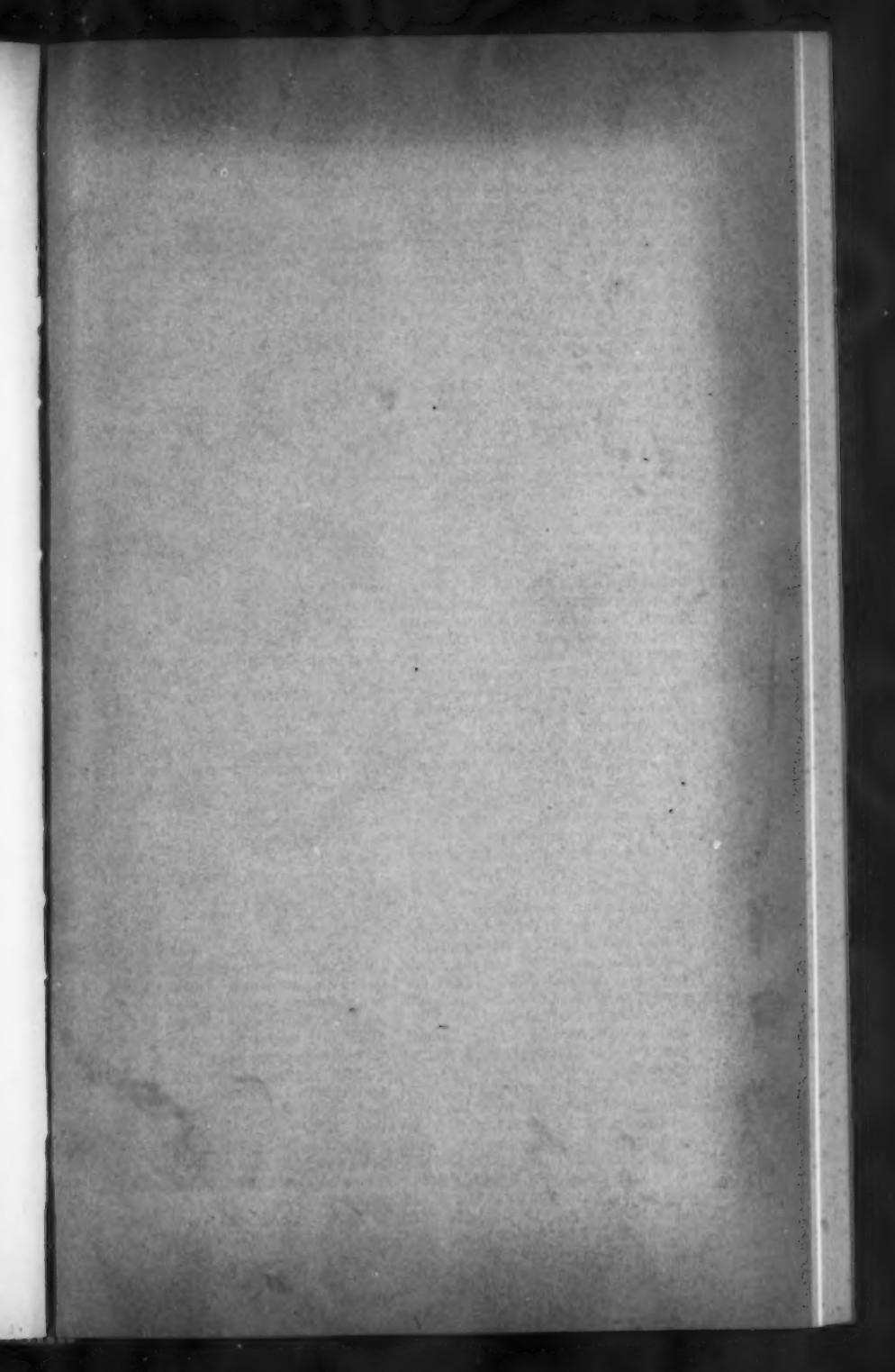
'I saw her cross the lawn the other evening, and she glanced once or twice towards the dining-room window. I was sitting in the recess of the large window, and saw her plainly.'

'Good gracious, aunt! Saw whom?'

'The girl that is waiting for you, George.'

'Bless my soul! my dear aunt, I think you must be mistaken. I am sure I am not in love with anybody, and I think I may safely venture to say there is nobody in love with me. What is the name of the young lady you saw upon the lawn?'

'Ah! that is more than I can tell you, George. I have seen her two or three times; but, oddly enough, none of the servants appear to have noticed her. And though I have described her, I can find out nothing about her. But she is waiting somewhere for you, George; I am sure of that.' All this she said in the same hollow, troubled voice.





Drawn by J. Mahoney.

THE OLD HOUSE BY THE RIVER.

(See the Sharp.)

That evening I made inquiries myself of some of the servants: they said that their mistress had asked who the young lady was that she had seen crossing the lawn two or three times; but they could tell her nothing, as no one else had observed this same young lady; and, indeed, they had supposed that it was simply an illusion: and I could not help agreeing with them.

A day or two afterwards, my aunt's conversation recurred to the young lady she persisted she had seen. Whenever she approached this strange topic, I noticed that her voice changed, her eyes lost their usual gentle expression, and she seemed to be gazing into vacancy.

'Have you found her yet, George?'

'No, aunt; I have discovered no trace; indeed, I have not even seen her yet; and,' I continued, hoping to humour her fancy, 'I hope I shall like her when I do see her.'

'That you will, boy, that you will, if you have any eye for beauty; for though my sight is not what it was, still I could see plainly that she is very lovely.'

'I wish she would come again, aunt, that I might see her.'

'Wheel my chair into the window-recess, and let me watch.'

I wheeled her chair to the spot she indicated; and resting her chin upon her left hand, she gazed steadily across the lawn towards the shrubbery.

So she sat silently for a long time, as it seemed to me. It was late for her to be still up, yet she would not move. She shook her head in a determined manner when I suggested ringing for the butler to help me carry her upstairs. It was just the time when the long twilight is fading into night, and there was a strange and solemn stillness over all; not a breath of air, not a leaf stirring; but still she sat motionless, and gazed intently towards the ever-deepening shadows of the little wood. It was a weird proceeding, to stand beside this ancient lady, in the gloaming of the hot summer night, and mark her earnest watching for one who I firmly believed had no real existence.

Hush! what was this? Why did she look eagerly at my face for a moment, and with her eyes direct my gaze towards the shrubbery?

Yes; it was to some purpose that she did so. There could be no mistake—no illusion there. I saw, as plainly as ever I saw anything in my life, the graceful figure of a woman emerging from the path that led through the shrubbery to the lawn. My aunt appeared to look at me triumphantly when she saw how my gaze was directed.

We neither of us spoke, but intently watched the advancing figure. On she came slowly, and, it seemed to me, sadly; and at last she paused upon the lawn directly opposite the window. Then for the first time she turned her face full towards us, and seemed to see us.

Although, as I have said, the twilight was fading into night, I could see her plainly. It was a tall, almost majestic figure. She wore a plain white morning dress, and her dark hair was bound with blue ribbons. Her face was indeed most lovely. I wondered afterwards, but not at the time, how it was I could see it all so clearly.

She paused, as I said, and seemed to see us. Then, after looking at us for a moment, she turned slowly and retraced her steps.

'I knew it!' said my aunt, in a whisper. 'She has found you, George. Whenever I have seen her before she has always gone straight on, seemingly disappointed; now she is going back contented.'

'Back where?' I exclaimed.

'Follow her, and see.'

I rushed from the room, gained the hall, unlocked and unbarred the heavy front-door, and was out in another instant upon the lawn. Too late: she had already disappeared. I was hastily turning towards the shrubbery, when a sharp cry from within arrested me, and darting in again, I found my aunt senseless in her chair.

CHAPTER II.

We carried her upstairs; but it was a long time before she was restored to partial consciousness. I

had sent off at once for the doctor, who resided within a couple of miles; and when he came, he pronounced gravely that that terrible enemy of human life, paralysis, had seized her.

The next day, all inquiries about, all search after our mysterious visitor were fruitless. No one had seen the young lady in the white dress; no one could give even the remotest guess as to who she might be, or where she could have come from; and the servants, who evidently thought, when they had been previously questioned by my aunt, that the figure was only the creation of an aged and wandering brain, were startled when they found that I, in the full possession of health and strength, had seen this same figure too. 'It must have been a ghost,' said one of the maids.

'A ghost! don't tell me. Pish, pooh, nonsense.'

It certainly was very strange; and I own I could by no means give to myself any satisfactory explanation of the mysterious occurrence. Still, I made up my mind that time would show, and we should have an easy solution of our present difficulty. These apparent mysteries always turn out to be something exceedingly simple, I said to myself. And, further, it seemed that I should have ample time for finding out the beautiful young lady with the dark hair, for my aunt seemed most anxious that I should not go away; so I was obliged to put off my continental trip indefinitely.

I am bound to say that it was no great hardship to me to stay at Daylesford, and do my best at nursing my dear old aunt. She was so quiet and patient; she loved so much to have me sitting in the room, and to hear me read to her; and she was so contented and so peaceful, that I often thought that I was happier and more contented in that sick chamber than I might have been while roaming restlessly about nature's grandest scenery.

I used to spend the best part of the day by her bedside; and when the evening came, I would take my rod and wander along the banks of the delightful stream.

One evening, about a fortnight after my aunt had been so suddenly struck, I started rather earlier than usual, intending to work my way farther up the stream than I had hitherto done, having heard from the keeper that there was a certain pool where some of the finest trout were to be found, and which I did not remember to have visited. All day long there had not been a cloud in the sky—the heat had been intense, and not a fish had been stirring in the river; and I calculated that soon after sunset the finny monarchs I was in search of would probably be on the feed, and in the evening shade I hoped to deceive their cunning.

I must have walked about three or four miles when I arrived at an open piece of water beyond which I had never yet penetrated; for, above this point, the trees and bushes on either side came down to the water, and they were so thick that it was next to impossible to throw a fly from the bank. The pool I was in search of was about half a mile beyond this, as I imagined from the description I had received. There was a quarter of an hour yet to sunset, so, as I was rather hot after my walk, I sat down in the shade of a great oak to rest a little. Meaning to rest for twenty minutes, I fell asleep for a full hour.

I was immensely annoyed with myself when I awoke to know that I had lost so much time, so I at once started off and plunged into the wood, keeping as near to the bank of the river as I could.

I hastened onward through the gloom—for the foliage of the trees was very thick, and I found some difficulty in making my way at all quickly through the bushes and brambles that were in my path. I kept as nearly as I could parallel with the stream; every now and then I caught a glimpse of it, and now and again heard the splash of a large fish. I certainly had expected better walking than this. I had understood from the keeper that there was a regular path running along the bank; certainly I could not find it, or anything like it. However, on I pushed, hoping that

my toil would speedily be rewarded by a basket of fine fish.

After some half hour's scrambling, I saw the sky in front of me more clearly; the underwood was not so thick, and I thought I must be near my goal—a nice quiet spot, the keeper had said; hardly any one ever had occasion to go that way, and the fish were very little disturbed by anglers or others. Another five minutes, and I was clear of the wood.

But, judge of my surprise when I found myself standing on a lawn-like piece of grass, the river indeed running fast and almost furiously upon my left hand, and straight in front of me, an old and strangely-fashioned house! I concluded I must have gone too far, and my first impulse was to retrace my steps, but I hesitated and took a good survey of the scene before me.

What house could this possibly be? I had never had the slightest suspicion that there was any one living up in this direction beyond a few labourers, but here was an old house, not large, but roomy, and of a strange and unusual style. Certainly it did not look very bright or cheerful, but still it did not look deserted, but could scarcely be inhabited by mere rustics. Between me and the house there lay a little garden and a burnt-up lawn. The garden was luxuriant, but not neatly kept, and the paths sadly wanted weeding. The house itself was an old grey pile with curious windows, more in the fashion of an unpretending German château than an English country-house. One side of the house was washed by the river, and on this side my attention was particularly struck by a large bay window at the height of some thirty feet above the water. Exactly opposite to me was the front door, which stood wide open.

It had a weird and ghostly aspect, this sombre house—none the less, I imagine, on this particular evening when the air was close and motionless, when the trees were dark and silent, and the shades of night were coming on. Even the river shared the general character of the place, for instead of the brawling stream

that I had been accustomed to, the waters at this place seemed to be much deeper and rushed by silently and swiftly.

However, if I was to have any sport after all the trouble I had taken, there was no time to be lost; so I quickly prepared to make a cast. Perhaps though, I thought, this part of the river belongs to the house, and I shall be ignominiously treated like a trespasser. I can't help it—the spot is much too tempting—and I advanced a pace or two nearer the bank. Then, involuntarily it seemed, I looked up again at the bay window overhanging the river, and saw that there was some-one there.

At first I could only see her profile, for she—it was a woman—was looking down upon the river, but what I saw of her face did not seem unfamiliar to me. Who could it be? After a moment or two, she looked up to the blue sky above her, and then slowly turned her face towards where I was standing. Then the full recognition rushed upon me. There could be no mistaking that face; it was the same my aunt and I had seen so mysteriously upon the lawn at Daylesford a few evenings back. It was here then that our strange visitor lived. Her eyes met mine, but, rude as it might seem, I could not withdraw my gaze. I stood like one entranced. I thought I had never seen any face one-half so beautiful, and yet so sad; there was a wearied look about the large dark eyes, and the countenance was very pale. For how long or short a time we continued thus gazing at each other, I cannot say. I only know that it was long enough for me to impress indelibly every line and feature upon my memory.

Suddenly she seemed to start, and half turned round, and looked within the room—then she again hastily turned towards me, and now there was a terrified, but passionate and imploring expression on her countenance. Involuntarily, I took a step forward and then paused again—for now I saw what was, apparently, a man's hand seize her by the arm and drag her from the window.

What could it all mean? Once it occurred to me that this might be some unhappy lunatic who was confined in this terrible old house—but I dismissed the idea at once. Still I stood rooted to the spot. Would she appear again?

Hush! what was that? A cry of some one in distress—a cry half smothered. I dropped the fishing-rod upon the grass. Should I rush through the open hall-door and at any risk solve this mystery?

Again that cry! not half suppressed this time but loud and piercing. I waited to hear no more, but sprang over the low iron railings that edged the lawn—rushed across the garden, and in another instant stood within a low and gloomy hall. To the right as I entered was a broad oak staircase, and up this I bounded—reached the first landing, and searched eagerly in the direction where I thought the door of the room with the bay window ought to be. Yes—there it was. I seized the handle, but the door was firmly fastened on the inside. I shook it violently, and again I heard the cry. I shouted for help, but heard nothing but my own voice, which sounded strangely hollow and subdued. Again I attempted to force the door, but to no purpose. I turned round, wildly looking for some instrument that might assist me, when I noticed another door standing ajar on the same side of the wall as the one I had been endeavouring to open. I darted through it, and found myself in a long narrow passage. Thinking there might possibly be another means of communication here with the room with the bay window, I hurried down it and came upon a door, which I instantly opened, and stood within a wide old-fashioned bed-chamber. But from this room by the uncertain light I could see no further outlet. Glancing hastily out of the window, I saw the river below me, and the bay window a little to my left. I looked again eagerly along the wall which separated the room I was in from the one in which some horrible struggle was evidently going on, and, noticing that it was panelled, hastily

thought that there might be some concealed or half-concealed door. As well as the light would permit me, I examined the panels, and passed my hands carefully down the mouldings in search of anything like a hinge or handle; but could find nothing of the sort. My left hand was searching down the side of the third panel and was on—I noticed it well—the paw of a quaintly-carved lion, when I heard again the cry from within, but this time fainter than before. I started violently, and in the action my hand pressed hard upon the lion's paw; it was a spring, and the panel slowly opened. In another instant I had passed through the aperture into the room beyond. But instead of the struggle, or worse, which I thought to have seen—the place was empty!

Could this be the room I was in search of? Yes—there was the bay window, there was the open casement from which I had seen her looking towards me. But how was this? There was thick dust on almost every article of furniture, as if no human being had been within this room for months! No sign of habitation—no trace whatever of any recent struggle. I examined the door which I had tried to open from the other side—it was still locked and bolted fast. No sound, not even of a mouse behind the wainscot. I searched the room thoroughly by what little light remained, became convinced that there could have been no one there, and at last left it by the sliding panel through which I had entered.

It was becoming rapidly dark as I retraced my steps, and after the intense excitement of a few moments back, a reaction came upon me, and a ghostly horror crept over me, as I descended the broad oak staircase. Everything around me tended to convince me that the place was not inhabited. Then, as I emerged from the gloomy hall into the fresh air, I thought I must be the victim of a strong delusion. But I looked up again at the bay-window, for I remembered every line and feature of the beautiful face I had seen there, and the awful cry was still ringing

in my ears. If that was a deception, then so was the house and everything around me. I could not understand it.

Slowly I passed through the neglected garden and across the burnt-up lawn, and regained the spot where I had dropped my rod. I took one last survey of the grim old house, and turned to go home, as it was now dark, and I had a long way to walk before I reached Daylesford. I determined to call at the keeper's cottage, which I should have to pass, and ask him how it was he had never even mentioned to me the existence of the place I was now leaving behind me.

The wood was very dark, and I could only proceed very slowly, guided in the right direction only by the noise of the stream, which seemed now, by its brawling, to be no longer the deep, rapid river it had seemed to be beneath that bay-window. By-and-by I saw that it was not so dark in front of me, and I concluded I must be near the open spot where I had slept for so long. I was right; but the moment I emerged from the wood my foot caught in the stump of a tree, and I fell heavily forward, my head came in contact with a large stone, and I lay senseless.

From this state I was at length aroused by my aunt's keeper, who, I found afterwards, had, from the position in which I lay, comprehended the nature of my accident.

'You have had a nasty tumble, sir,' said he; 'tripped your foot in that there root, and knocked your head agin this here stone.'

'Where am I? Oh, I remember. I remember all now.' I looked around me; one thing seemed very odd. The root I had tripped ought, as it seemed to me, to have been near the wood, and the stone against which I had fallen farther off, but the reverse was the case. 'I was meaning to call at your cottage, Giles, on my way home. How lucky you happened to come up just at this moment.'

'Well, sir, I didn't exactly happen,' replied the keeper, somewhat confusedly. 'The fact is, I was a looking for you, and know'd as you

had come along this way after them big trout.'

'I am afraid you will be disappointed, Giles. I have not even had a cast.'

'Haven't you, sir? Well, it won't exactly that as I came after, neither. I was sent to look for you.'

'Sent to look for me! Is it so very late?'

'No, sir; 'taint that, neither. But the missus, she's been took bad again, and has been asking for you, and they sent me to fetch you.'

'Indeed!' I exclaimed, starting to my feet. 'Another attack! The doctors said a second stroke would prove most serious.'

'That's just where it is, sir. Grant I mayn't be too late.'

'Too late! Good heavens! Is my aunt dying?'

'Well, sir, I don't want to alarm you, but I think as how you'd better be going back as fast as you can—if you feel all right now after that fall.'

I could see by the man's manner that there was indeed no time to be lost; so I hurried homeward as fast as possible; and the thought of my aunt's condition put out of my head for some little time the scenes I had so lately witnessed. Indeed, we were pretty well half-way home before I again addressed the keeper.

'Whose house is that?' I asked, abruptly, 'about half an hour's walk up through the wood?'

'Which house, sir?'

'Why, that queer old house by the river side, about, as I said, half an hour's walk beyond the place where you found me—where the river runs so deep and quietly?'

'Deep and quietly?' echoed the keeper in amazement; 'why, you are pretty nigh the spring up there. It don't run deep, and there ain't no house.'

'Nonsense; it can't be near the spring, and I saw the house with my own eyes.'

'Well, sir, I have been along that way many a time for this last thirty year, and I know the spring is there, and I never saw no house.'

'Then is there any other stream that flows into this one anywhere in that direction?'

'Not the ghost of a one, sir,' was the prompt reply.

Not the ghost of a one! Was it possible that all I had seen and heard—the bay window, the matchless face, the gloomy hall, the fearful cries, the secret panel—was only the creation of an accident to my head? No; I remembered it all too clearly. It was impossible!

But further conversation with the keeper half-convinced me that it was possible. He had lived in these parts all his life, and he denied all knowledge of the house, which I minutely described to him.

'You must have been a-dreaming, sir.'

'Well, perhaps I was, Giles.'

However that might be I determined that, on the first opportunity, I would find my way back to the spot, and satisfy myself whether or not I had been the victim of an illusion.

The opportunity never came. I found my aunt speechless, and at daybreak she died. I found that there was much for me to do as sole executor, and immediately after the funeral I had to leave for London. So I left —shire without attempting to solve the mystery of the strange old house beside the river.

CHAPTER III.

I had a good deal to do, as I have said, in settling all my deceased aunt's affairs, but when I had cleared off all these I felt more inclined than ever for my long-meditated continental trip. I should say that my aunt had by no means forgotten me in her will, and I consequently found myself in a far better position, pecuniarily speaking, than before, and I determined to enlarge considerably the small circumference of travel I had originally sketched. Indeed I think I obliterated it altogether; there was no need for me now to limit myself to the expenditure of fifty pounds, so I provided myself liberally with circular notes, and arrived at London Bridge station one fine morning in August, ready to go wherever my wayward fancy might take me.

I hate making plans. To be the victim of a fixed idea at any time is bad enough, but for a tourist to map out a certain route and never deviate from it by a mile is indeed a miserable fate.

I intended to spend some days in Paris, but it was much too hot. Which way next? Why not to Cologne and up the Rhine? That would do as well as anything else, so I went by the night express to Cologne. Of course I went up the Drachenfels. When I was at the top I thought how much better the view was from the bottom. Then I went on board the steamboat, and whom should I fall in with but Everard.

'Well, old man,' he exclaimed, 'this is a find. So far I have been bored out of my life. You wouldn't believe it, but I have been doing churches in Belgium—read up somebody on architecture on purpose—to say nothing of somebody else's notes on the Middle Ages. Where are you going?'

'I really hardly know,' I replied, 'Switzerland or the Tyrol, I think.'

'You must come along with me first. I am going to do the dutiful at Wiesbaden. My people are there: the mother is drinking hot water, I believe. She doesn't exactly know why, but she thinks she likes it. The governor is taking baths for what he calls rheumatism, and other people call the gout. Come to Wiesbaden, there's a good soul, and have a look at the tables.'

I at once consented, and soon found myself comfortably lodged in that extremely uninteresting place, for there certainly appeared to me to be nothing to do there but to look at a Greek church with a shining dome, walk up to the top of a hill where it was the custom to drink beer, and, when not peripatetically inclined, watch the unhappy victims of the gambling-tables. I was not, I should say, in the same hotel as Everard, as I could not, on first arriving, get a room there.

I had been at Wiesbaden for nearly a week, when I began to think it was time to move on; but it occurred to me, as I was sitting alone at breakfast, that I had gained

no practical experience in the mysteries of rouge-et-noir. I had looked on often enough, but I had never felt tempted to stake a kreutzer on the chances, and I thought I ought really to do something in that way, if only for the benefit of the bank which provided me with the kursaal and the pleasant gardens. I am bound to say I had not the least expectation of winning a farthing. I knew my luck too well. Still, I walked to the tables with the fixed and deliberate intention of playing.

'I suppose I am a fool,' I observed to myself, as I walked leisurely along. 'It isn't in my nature to win. I know how unlucky I am at cards,' there I paused; for Everard's saying instantly recurred to me: 'Unlucky at cards—lucky in a wife.'

Perhaps, now that I was considerably more independent than when I was at Oxford, my luck might have changed. Perhaps, after all, I might turn out to be lucky at cards, and unlucky—well, as far as the cards were concerned, I should soon see.

It was very absurd of me, but I really felt quite anxious to know whether my luck had changed. I entered the largest *salon de jeu*, and found that there were already very many persons gathered round the table, and play was in full swing. I waited patiently for some time, watching the persistency with which some of the players adhered to a system and lost, and how others apparently staked at haphazard and won. At last, a withered old woman with a repulsive wig and well-rouged cheeks, having lost her last florin, got up and left the table, and I took her place. I had just ten napoleons in my pocket: if I doubled them, I determined to be content; if I lost them, to be—if possible—equally content.

Rouge had gained five times consecutively when I took my seat, therefore I backed Noir. I lost. Backed Noir again: lost again. Again, won. Again, the irrevocable Rouge triumphed four times running, but I had faithfully stuck to Noir, and I continued to stick to it. Rouge persistently won the day, and

in a manner that ought to have astonished the croupier, if that stolid functionary had it in him to be astonished at anything. However, I was backing Noir, so it was but natural that Rouge should be the winning colour. In twenty minutes, my ten napoleons had passed from my possession, and I rose from my chair, much to the surprise of a Russian gentleman next me, who evidently thought me very pusillanimous.

I felt a hand upon my shoulder.

'My dear George, how can you be such an ass! You, of all men, to try your wretched luck!'

It was Everard who spoke; he had been standing behind me all the time.

'Simply an experiment, my dear fellow. You know me too well to think there is anything of the gambler about me. Good heavens!'

Everard started at my sudden exclamation.

'What is the matter, George?'

I could not answer; I stood spell-bound. For there at the door which led out upon the gardens stood one whom I recognised in an instant. I recognised the majestic figure—the white morning dress—the dark hair bound with blue ribbons—the peerless loveliness—the same that I had seen on the lawn at Daylesford, and in the bay window of the old house beside the river!

Her eyes met mine. Was I deceived, or did she, too, really start? I fancied that she did.

I could not withdraw my eager gaze, and I saw she coloured slightly, as she moved slowly away into the kursaal grounds.

'Ah, I see what it is,' said Everard, laughing: 'you're struck too. That young lady who just went out literally walks upon the bodies of her victims.'

'For God's sake, tell me who she is!'

'Is it possible you don't know?' returned Everard, amused at my vehemence: 'that is the beautiful Miss Irvine—Mabel Irvine—have you never heard of her?'

'Never,' I replied, mechanically, still gazing vacantly at the spot where she had stood.

'She was the belle of Rome last winter—as she is of every place she goes to. And though her face ought to be fortune enough, she has five thousand a year into the bargain!'

'An heiress,' I muttered, as we walked out of the salon.

'Rather—and no mistake about it, either. In fact, I believe I have put the figure rather too low.'

'You say she was in Rome last winter—do you happen to know if she has been in England this summer?'

'I happen to know that she has not; they are staying at our hotel, and have only recently come from Italy.'

'They—who are they?'

'Herself and an elderly cousin with whom she is travelling—a Colonel Irvine; he is her guardian or something of that sort, I believe, for she is an orphan, and not quite of age.'

'This is indeed most strange!' I muttered as we walked along arm in arm.

'What is strange?'

'You say that she has only just come from Italy—and yet I could swear that I saw her up in the north of England, not two months ago. And yet I must be mistaken.'

'Of course you are. Colonel Irvine himself has told me all about their voyagings. But I should hardly have thought you could have been so fortunate as to have seen any one so like her.'

'I should hardly have thought so,' I echoed.

'Come and dine with me this evening at our table-d'hôte. They sit opposite to us, and after dinner I can introduce you.'

I suppose there must have been a very strange expression on my face as I stopped and looked up at my friend, for he exclaimed:

'Bless me, George! Why, what's the matter with the man? Are you frightened at the happiness that awaits you? You don't seem half to like the thoughts of coming.'

'Oh yes. I'll come with pleasure,' I answered, eagerly. 'But there's something rather odd about this meeting. I can't explain it to you

now, Everard. At what time is your table-d'hôte?'

'Five, sharp.'

'I'll be with you punctually. I must say good-bye for the present.'

Excusing myself as best I could for not continuing our walk, I turned hastily away, leaving my friend, as I felt sure, staring after me in the most unfeigned astonishment.

Arrived at my own apartments, I threw myself into an arm-chair and endeavoured to reflect calmly.

Will it seem strange if I say that in this morning I had almost forgotten that vision on the lawn—in the bay window—and those dreadful cries? Yet such indeed was the case. If they ever did cross my thoughts, it was more in the fashion of a half-forgotten dream; in fact, I think I had persuaded myself that the whole thing was an illusion of the brain, created, I know not how, by the accident I met with on the night before my aunt's death.

But now all the circumstances rushed back upon my memory with a marvellous vividness. I was again with my aunt gazing out into the twilight, and I saw again the beautiful white figure cross the lawn. Again, I was wandering along the stream, rod in hand; again, I was fighting my way through the thick wood; again, I was standing before the quaint old house beside the river; again, I saw the lovely face in the bay window: I heard the cries—I was in the house; I touched the spring—I remembered exactly whereabouts it was—I stood within the mysteriously empty chamber. No, it could have been no mere illusion. For here in the flesh was the woman I had seen, and I should soon be speaking with her. How could I explain it? And did she not too, on her part, seem to recognise me as she stood beside the door? The slight gesture she made, when her eyes met mine, certainly made me think so.

Suddenly those odd words of my aunt's recurred to me, as if she had only just spoken them:

'There's somebody waiting for you, George; somebody keeps coming and going!'

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thought, but I could arrive at no satisfactory solution of the riddle that was puzzling me. By-and-by, looking at my watch, I found that it was time to prepare for dinner.

I could not help it, I own, I was excited; foolishly so, it may have been. I scarcely knew as I left my hotel which desire preponderated most, to penetrate a seeming mystery or to feast my eyes upon the radiant loveliness of Mabel Irvine.

At dinner I was indeed seated exactly opposite Miss Irvine, but unfortunately—or fortunately, I suppose I ought to say—I was placed between two of Everard's sisters—pretty, charming, high-spirited, I admit—but on this occasion they were too much for me, and I felt painfully oppressed by their gaiety. I am certain that they confided to each other afterwards that I was either very stupid or very cross.

I scarcely dared to look directly at Miss Irvine; furtively I did so once or twice, and I could not resist the impression that she seemed nearly as embarrassed as I was. I turned my attention chiefly to her cousin, guardian, or whatever he was—Colonel Irvine—and I marked him well.

He was a man of, apparently, some eight and forty or fifty years of age, and must have been strikingly handsome in his youth and prime. His hair was already grey, but there were no signs of baldness, and he wore a long drooping moustache. The eyes were fiery and restless, but, handsome as he was, there was, at times, something of a sinister expression on his face which was calculated to make most persons think twice before they would knowingly make him an enemy. Altogether, I felt that I should not like him, and I endeavoured to get rid of the impression, for I had resolved to make myself as agreeable to him as possible.

Table-d'hôte over, we all strolled up to the kursal for coffee, and at the first opportunity, Everard presented me to the Irvines. The colonel was studiously polite, unnecessarily so, it seemed to me; asked me what route I had been pursuing, and discoursed eloquently

upon Italy. It was not until some time had passed that I got a chance of speaking to Mabel. We had finished coffee and the 'petit verre,' and were sauntering through the gardens. Everard's father, I am happy to say, had fastened upon the colonel, the animated young ladies met some friends, and I found myself by Mabel's side.

'Do you like Wiesbaden, Miss Irvine?' was my first rather ordinary observation.

'We only came yesterday,' she replied, in a sweet voice which thrilled through me, 'so I can hardly say. It seems very dull and commonplace after Italy.'

Could that be the voice I had heard in such other tones in the quaint old house beside the river? I shuddered as I asked myself the question.

'You have been spending the winter at Rome, Everard tells me. I suppose you have been coming northwards slowly.'

'Yes; we stayed some time at Florence and Venice, and now are only just come from the Italian lakes.'

I resolved to lose no more time, so I said, somewhat abruptly,—

'Tell me, Miss Irvine, and excuse the question—but, have you a sister?'

She looked up at me in astonishment, and answered—

'No—what makes you ask that question?'

'Simply because your face is so strangely familiar to me. Indeed,' I continued, looking at her fixedly, 'when I caught a glimpse of you this morning in the salon, I could have sworn you were some one I had seen a short time since in the north of England.'

'The north of England! I have never been there in my life. And I have not been in England at all for eighteen months nearly.'

Mystery on mystery! The more I looked at her, the more I felt convinced of her identity.

'It is very odd,' I muttered.

'I daresay you saw somebody like me. Or,' she added, laughing lightly, 'perhaps you are only making conversation. I assure you

I have known gentlemen say all sorts of odd things on first introduction, in order to avoid appearing commonplace.'

'No—indeed,' I answered, eagerly. 'My question was *bonâ fide*. I cannot tell you, Miss Irvine, how sorely the resemblance puzzles me.'

'Well, I acquit you of the charge,' she replied, gravely; 'the more so, as I can quite appreciate your position. Oddly enough, I thought I recognised you this morning. Candidly own, Mr. Seaforth, instead of the north of England were you not in Florence last June?'

'Florence!' I exclaimed, in my turn. 'Till a fortnight ago I was never on the Continent.'

'Then, as you say, it is rather odd,' she rejoined, in a musing tone. 'I certainly saw some one very like you there. The circumstance recurred to my mind this afternoon.'

I could not help noticing that she blushed slightly—she, too, had been puzzling over a face—as she continued:

'It was one hot and sultry evening, I remember: I had been for a walk with my maid. As we returned home, I remembered that I wanted her to do some trifling shopping; so, as we were not far from the hotel, I sent her to execute my commissions, and I went on alone. I had to pass an English-looking house—which I had passed once or twice before—with a neat attempt at lawn and garden in front of it, and as it was so unlike most Italian villas, I could not help pausing to look at it. Suddenly, I became aware that some one, an Englishman apparently, was observing me from a window on the ground-floor. I saw his face distinctly, and I suppose you very much resemble him. I saw an old lady sitting by the window, too. I had seen her on previous occasions as I passed, not with a gentleman.'

The close summer evening—my aunt—the dining-room window—the lawn—the white figure turned towards us: the whole scene was before me.

'I don't know,' she went on, smiling, 'if this gentleman's appearance would have impressed

itself so strongly upon me, if I had not met him again.'

'May I ask—when and where?' I said, breathlessly.

'I will tell you. A few evenings afterwards, I was standing on the balcony of our salon in the hotel which overlooked the Arno. I saw this same Englishman—if Englishman he was—standing beside the parapet on the bank of the river, gazing steadily at me. I recognised him at once, and felt rather angry at thinking that he recognised me, and was just retreating into the room when suddenly I was seized with a horrible spasm in my throat,—just managed to stagger back into the salon, and fell fainting on the floor.'

'I hope you were not seriously ill?'

'No—it was some miasma from the river, the doctors said. Colonel Irvine summoned two or three Florentine physicians. I believe they would have killed me if they had had their way. They wanted to bleed me, but I resolutely declined.'

I determined to keep my own counsel, and say nothing now of the when and the where I had seen her, or her image, before. Her story was perfectly plain and simple—not so, mine. So I merely said, with an effort at gaiety—

'I believe I have got Scotch blood in my veins: henceforth I shall steadily believe in doubles.'

I contrived to change the conversation, and we walked on amid the deepening shades—and oh! what a happy time to me! I had read of love—latterly, I had dreamed of love—and now I knew the sweet reality.

After a while, I observed the colonel glance over his shoulder sharply towards us, and soon afterwards he turned back and joined us, and said, in a singularly soft and pleasing voice—

'It is getting late, Mabel; and the evening damp in these gardens is not as wholesome as it might be—certainly not for you. I think you must ask Mr. Seaforth to turn round and take you home again.'

'Ought I really to go in, Cousin James? It is so delicious out here.'

'Well, I don't want to be a tyrant, but I really think you had better be going homewards now. Remember, you are not in Italy.'

So we all turned back; but Colonel Irvine thought fit to walk by my side and enter into conversation with me. One of Everard's sisters trotted up to Mabel, and the thrice-happy *tête-à-tête* walk was at an end.

'You are destined for the bar, Mr. Seaforth, our friend Tom Everard tells me. Well, it is unquestionably a fine profession, but the prizes are comparatively very few, and the competition is very great.'

'Quite true,' I replied, laughing; 'but may you not say the same of all professions now-a-days? Out of six competent men, five go to the wall.'

'Then what becomes of the incompetent?' asked the colonel.

'Perhaps they go right through the wall, and come out more fortunate on the other side.'

'That's a hopeful view to take of their condition, at all events. Whereabouts do you intend to be? Not in the wall altogether, I trust.'

This was said in the lightest and pleasantest manner possible; but, Heaven knows why, I mistrusted the tone, and answered as much as possible in his own manner:

'Well, I am bound to say I don't expect too much. Still, I don't mean to be left with the ruck; even if I don't get a place, I hope at any rate to be decidedly in the race.'

'A metaphor from the turf,' he exclaimed. 'Do you do much in that way, Mr. Seaforth?'

'Nothing at all, Colonel Irvine,' I replied, hastily. 'I really don't know what made me use the expression. Of course I have seen something of it, but what I have seen I don't like.'

'I am glad to hear it. The paddock and the betting ring are bad places. Still, fine fortunes are made there occasionally.'

'And finer fortunes more often lost.'

I felt that he looked at me sharply for an instant, but he only said—

'Quite true—quite true.'

Everard's father then came up to us, and shortly afterwards we arrived at their hotel.

'Good-night' to Mabel! What a strange, and hitherto to me unknown and unexperienced thrill of pleasure passed through me as I pressed her hand!

I had some few letters to write that night before I went to bed, and amongst these was one to a certain Major Wray, an elderly bachelor, long since retired from the service, who I had known all my life, and who, I had a sort of notion, was my godfather. He resided in London, and though he was, as I suspected, possessed of anything but ample means, he had always been a good fast friend to me. He had that not uncommon qualification of being able to give good advice to everybody except himself. However, he contrived to live pretty comfortably in 'society,' and had a knack of knowing everybody. It occurred to me, at the close of my despatch, to make the following inquiry:—

'By-the-by, as you are acquainted with most people who turn up periodically in the vast metropolis, do you happen ever to have fallen in with a certain Colonel Irvine? He is a fine handsome man of, say, fifty years of age. I have just met him here. He is travelling with a juvenile cousin of his, a young lady, Mabel Irvine, said to be—I know not with what amount of truth—a great heiress. Heiress or not, one has only to look at her to feel perfectly satisfied about her—she is wonderfully good-looking. But I own I am not satisfied about the colonel. I can't tell why. You, my dear major, with your cynical habits of thought, have, perhaps, instilled a certain amount of suspicion of human nature into me, and I feel a little suspicious of this colonel. You will probably say that I ought to trust the man and not the woman. Give me your sound reasons, major, and I shall be convinced.'

IN REGENT STREET.

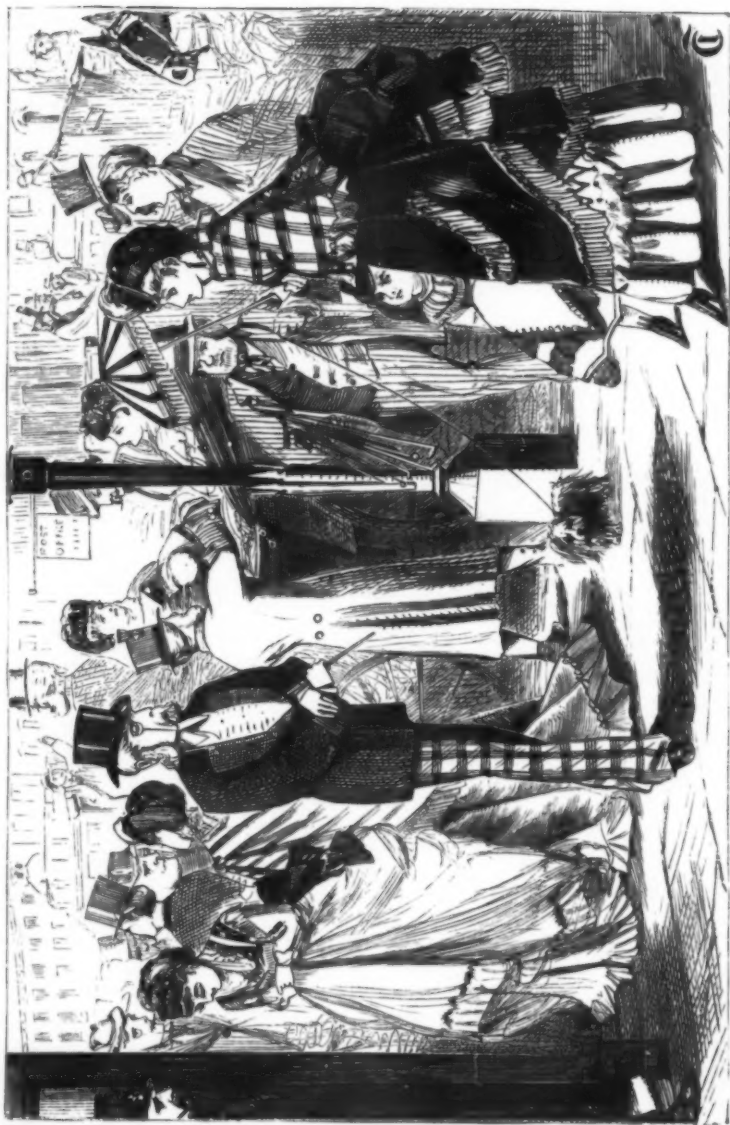
LET London's lyrist gaily sing,
 In weather warm or chilly,
 The pleasures new all objects bring
 When seen in Piccadilly.
 Or round the street of famed Saint James
 Weave myriad sparkling fancies
 Of powdered squires, brocaded dames,
 And other like romances.

Bond Street may suit our gilded youth,
 Aristocratic very :
 If Cork Street's something dull, in truth
 The ' Burlington ' is merry.
 Beyond all other haunts, Pall Mall,
 The shady side or sunny,
 Is dear to ' flâneur,' clubman, swell—
 But, oh, Pall Mall wants money !

Exclusive thoroughfares are these :
 The miscellaneous many
 The street our artist's drawn will please
 As well as—more than—any.
 Motley enough the crowd one meets—
Qui rident multa legent—
 The most cosmopolite of streets
 Is surely that called Regent.

Here Parthian jostles Elamite,
 I speak in tropes,—no matter—
 Poles, Spaniards, Dutch, a medley sight,
 Heavens, what a panglot chatter !
 The swarthy son of Ursko,
 And Chinaman from Pekin,
 Cilician, Cappadocian—know
 Again in tropes I'm speaking.

And other meetings scarce less strange,
 You'll see them by the dozen
 As down the street you idly range,
 Town bird and country cousin.
 Want elbows wealth, the false the true,
 Juxtaposition curious.
 Fair cheeks whose bloom is Nature's hue,
 And cheeks whose bloom is spurious.



Drawn by H. Tuck.

IN REGENT STREET.







Drawn by M. A. Lloyd.]

SWEET VISIONS.

"And while my lone step prints the dew,
 Dear are the dreams that bless my view;
 To Memory's eye the maid appears,
 For whom have sprung my sweetest tears
 So oft, so tenderly."

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And high-dressed swells are *vis-à-vis*
 With seedy skulking rowdies,
 A jumble odd enough to see
 In Regent Street this crowd is.
 Here jaded miss buys silken gown,
 Yawneth yon squire allegiant;
 The most amusing street in town,
 I think is that called Regent.

FANCY AND FASHION IN FANS.

A DAINTY collection of Fans is this at South Kensington: the most dainty, the most extensive, ever assembled at one time and place in this country. Here are fans of many different centuries, exemplifying the ordeal through which fashion seems destined to pass, and at the same time showing how remarkably individual fancy can assert itself in special instances. Not only are there choice specimens of English production, but illustrations likewise of the handiwork of Italy, Spain, Germany, Austria, Holland, and Belgium; and, in more distant climes, of India, China, and Japan. It would not be easy to assign a market value to these four hundred fine examples of workmanship; because some of them, ranking as works of art, would be objects of very eager competition at Christie's or Sotheby's, and would realise prices far ahead of those which were paid for them when originally manufactured; while other specimens would have a high value attached to them, irrespective of their beauty, on account of the distinguished ladies to whom they now belong or once belonged. Not only have the great French fan-makers—such as Duvelleroy, Alexandre, Chardin, and Fayet—contributed some of their choicest productions; but royal and noble ladies have freely assisted to make the collection large and complete. Queen Victoria has sent seventeen fans, the Empress Eugénie nearly double this number; while the English nobility are represented by the Duchess of Northumberland, Countess of Warwick, Lady Lindsey,

Countess of Craven, Lady Drake, Countess Granville, Countess of Tankerville, Countess of Dudley, Countess of Shaftesbury, &c.; and the French nobility by la Vicomtesse d'Aguardo, la Comtesse Duchâtel, Princess Metternich, la Comtesse de Beaussier, la Duchesse de Mouchy, la Comtesse d'Armaillé, la Comtesse de Bardaillac, la Comtesse de Pourtalès, &c. Lady Wyatt is the most lavish contributor of all, having sent in no less than seventy-three fans, of various ages and countries, but all remarkable in their artistic features. And gentlemen, too, though not fan-users in Europe, have been fan-buyers, and have contributed out of their stores to this very choice and pleasant collection.

Who can tell us when and where the fan was first used? As its real purpose is to create an artificial breeze of cooling air in a warm atmosphere, we may naturally look to hot climates as the land of its birth. We know that there were fans in Egypt three or four thousand years ago, for they are represented in paintings on the walls of the buildings at Thebes. Indeed the fan-bearer was a high officer among the Pharaohs—using his fan as a standard in war, as a breeze-creating instrument in the palace, and to wave off noxious insects from the sacred offerings in the temple. The ancient Greeks used fans very beautiful in form; sometimes the wings of a bird joined laterally, and attached to a slender handle; sometimes feathers of different lengths spread out somewhat in the form of

a semicircle, and affixed to a handle. The Roman ladies had gorgeous fans of peacocks' feathers and tinted ostrich plumes, held by attendants. We know that noble ladies in Europe used fans in the thirteenth century; but it is uncertain how much further back the usage could be traced. The *folding-fan*, as we now know it, was certainly invented in Japan, from which country it went to China, thence to Portugal (in the fifteenth century), thence to Spain and Italy, and (in the sixteenth century) to France and England. The fan-trade has never at any other period been so important in Europe as it was about the middle of the last century, when a fan was quite indispensable to a lady, and when nearly every lady had an assortment of them. It was an important implement for fascination, for grace, for love-making, for coquetry, for a kind of silent talk on all sorts of subjects. One poet called it the 'sceptre of the world.' A French lady, of the time of Louis Quatorze, declared that however agreeable, graceful, and elegantly dressed a woman might be, she would necessarily be ridiculous unless she knew how to handle a fan; that you could tell a princess from a comtesse, a comtesse from a marquise, a marquise from an untitled lady, by delicate movements of the fan; and that this subtle instrument by its opening and closing, its rising and falling, its sweeping and waving, its pointing and beating, might be made significant of an almost infinity of meanings. Addison, long before this, talked very pleasantly in the 'Spectator' of the language of the fan. He supposes a regiment of young ladies drawn up in line, and going through the fan exercise, obeying the words of command 'handle your fans,' 'unfurl your fans,' 'discharge your fans,' 'ground your fans,' 'recover your fans,' 'flutter your fans,' &c. The description of three of these evolutions, the 'handling,' the 'unfurling,' and the 'fluttering,' is very rich. 'Upon giving the word "Handle your fans," each lady shakes her fan at me with a smile, then gives her right-hand neighbour a tap upon the

shoulder, then presses her lips with the extremity of the fan, and then lets her arms fall in an easy motion.' The 'unfurling' is effective, because it gives an opportunity of displaying the dainty devices painted on the fan: 'This part of the exercise pleases the spectator more than any other; as it discovers on a sudden an infinite number of Cupids, garlands, altars, birds, rainbows, and the like agreeable figures, that display themselves to view.' Then, as to the order 'Flutter your fans:' 'There is an infinite variety of motions to be made use of in the flutter of a fan. There is the angry flutter, the modest flutter, the timorous flutter, the confused flutter, the merry flutter, and the amorous flutter. Not to be tedious, there is scarcely any emotion in the mind which does not produce a suitable agitation in the fan; inasmuch that if I only see the fan of a disciplined lady, I know very well whether she laughs, frowns, or blushes. I have seen a fan so very angry, that it would have been dangerous for the absent lover who provoked it to have come within the wind of it; and at other times so very languishing, that I have been glad for the lady's sake the lover was at a sufficient distance from it. I need not add, that a fan is either a prude or a coquette, according to the nature of the person who bears it.' Then the P.S. is worthy of the rest: 'I teach young gentlemen the whole art of gallanting a fan.'

Many a pleasant episode is connected with the fans in this beautiful collection, relating either to the fair owners themselves, or to the circumstances under which the ownership has changed from time to time. Among those contributed by Lady Wyatt is one which was presented to her grandmother on her wedding day, nearly a century ago: a bespangled silken mount, with carved and gilt ivory stick, and enamelled and embossed guards. A vellum fan, painted by Vidal and Herry, and mounted in pierced and carved mother-of-pearl, was presented to the Empress Eugénie when she distributed the prizes at the Paris International Exhibition in

1855.
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1855. A French fan with a modern mount has a stick which once belonged to a fan of Madame la Marquise de Pompadour, in the gay days of Louis Quatorze. A fan which formed part of the wedding-suite of the Empress is here, marked with the date 30 January, 1853. An old Chinese fan with a stick of gold filagree having enamel enrichments was presented by the Chinese ambassador in 1804, on the occasion of the coronation of Napoleon I., to Madame la Maréchale Comtesse Clauzel; whose granddaughter, Madame de Ville de Sardelys, is now the owner of it. A more historically interesting fan is that which belonged to the hapless Queen Marie Antoinette; she gave it to her 'keeper of laces' in 1789, from whom it passed through the hands of Madame la Bruyère to M. de Thiac; the carving in ivory of the 'Interview between Porus and Alexander' is very dainty work. An old ivory French fan, decorated in 'Vernis Martin,' is the one which Madame de Sévigné described as containing a picture of 'The toilet of Madame la Marquise de Montespan.' We may here remark that *Vernis Martin* is named from a celebrated coach-painter, Martin, who, in the time of Louis XIV., applied the arts both of painting and of varnishing in a very beautiful way to fans. The fan presented by the Empress Eugénie to the Comtesse de Pourtalès, made by Alexandre of Paris, has exquisite little enamels by Solier, imbedded in the gold ornaments of the guards. Another, with paintings by Prevost, of Francis I. at the Château d'Anet, Louis XIV. at Versailles, and the present Emperor and Empress at the Bois de Boulogne, was presented by the same gracious lady to the Viscountess Aguado, one of her Dames d'Honneur; as were likewise two others, of great beauty, to Princess Metternich. The Countess Granville's fan, presented to her ladyship by the Foreign Commissioners of the Exhibition of 1867, is rich with its paintings on silk by Hamon, and its carvings in ivory by Rambert. One of the fans was that which was made in 1837 for the

marriage of the Duchess d'Orléans, and now belongs to her god-daughter the Comtesse de Paris; as is likewise the fan made by Duverroley for the marriage of the last-named royal lady in 1864. Rather a curious work of art is a fan belonging to the Prince of Wales, delicately painted in Russia by an Hungarian artist, and presenting an allegorical painting of the Return of the Prince from Russia after the Marriage of his Sister-in-law, the Princess Dagmar of Denmark, to the Czarewitch; the manner in which about twenty little Cupids are busying themselves with adieux and regrets—some carrying the 'Ich Dien,' and others the Prince of Wales's plume of feathers—is certainly fanciful. A fan that once belonged to Madame la Marquise de Pompadour, but is now the property of Madame Achille Jubinal, is marvellously cut in paper in imitation of lace: so fine that it is difficult to conceive what kind of cutting instruments were employed in the fabrication. An English fan of the time of Charles I. was presented in 1696 by the Princess Anne, afterwards Queen of England, to a young lady on her marriage with a country squire. A fan belonging eighty years ago to Marie Antoinette has had her cipher removed from it, and another cipher placed on the shield. An early German fan, once belonging to the collection at Gotha, was presented by the late Prince Consort to the Queen; as was also a dress fan of modern French production. Here is a fan which was made for the *corbille* of the Duchess d'Orléans, and which was presented by the Comte de Paris to our Princess Helena on her marriage with Prince Christian; and here a fan presented to Queen Victoria by the Queen of Prussia in 1852, with paintings of seven royal residences in the two countries; and here one which passed successively into the hands of three queens—Marie Antoinette, the Queen of the Belgians, and Queen Victoria; and here an Italian fan of the last century, which belonged to Queen Charlotte, then to the Duchess of Bedford, by whom (when lady of the bedchamber).

was presented to the present Queen. Other fans presented to her Majesty, and more or less attractive in character, are those given by the Duke of Coburg and the Duchess of Gordon, a third that belonged to the late Princess Charlotte, and a fourth once owned by Queen Adelaide. A fan, painted on chicken-skin in the Pompeian style, was the one which the Princess Charlotte presented in 1809 to her governess, the Countess of Elgin. A Dutch fan, nearly two hundred years old, is supposed to have been designed to commemorate the marriage of William of Orange with Mary of England; it belonged to a distinguished family in Holland, partisans of the Orange cause. One, skilfully painted on kid, belonged to Benjamin West; while another, painted on chicken-skin, belonged to Sir Joshua Reynolds, by whom it was given to his niece, the Marchioness of Thomond. Our distinguished painters would gladly possess fans on which the pencils of Watteau or Gavarni had been exercised—irrespective of all other attractions.

The *éventailistes*, or fan manufacturers, of France carry on their trade with a good deal of organisation and system. Twenty different operations, performed by as many pairs of hands, are necessary for the production of even a halfpenny French fan; and for the costly productions of high finish, the number of subdivisions is of course far larger. The *éventailistes* themselves—the Duvelleroy, Alexandres, Fayets, Chardins—are, in fact, only the makers-up or finishers; they purchase the various parts of the fans in various districts of France, and employ persons to put them together or build them up. There are, it appears, four distinct branches of trade, associated with different component parts of a fan; and no fan, whether humble or luxurious, is complete until all these branches have contributed their aid. So economical are the materials and manufacture of some fans, that even Duvelleroy would take an order for such at the price of fivepence per dozen; while at the other extreme are fans in which the mother-of-

pearl sticks contain no less than sixteen hundred distinct holes, each worked with a saw, in a square inch!

Let us take a bird's-eye glance at the mode of conducting the manufacture. The French give the name of *piéd* to the solid or firm parts of a fan, and that of *feuille* to the flexible or folding part. The *piéd* is subdivided into the *brins* or inner ribs, and *panaches* or outer ribs. The frame or *piéd* is made of any one among a large variety of materials—ebony, plum-wood, sandal-wood, lime-tree, bone, ivory, tortoiseshell, mother-of-pearl, &c., cheap or costly according to the quality of the fan. The materials for the ribs are brought into shape by sawing, filing, polishing, piercing, carving, gilding, and other decorative processes; the spangles and pins of gold, silver, and steel are affixed; and the several ribs are riveted to a joint at the end of the handle, where a gem or precious stone often adorns the more costly specimens. There is much scope for the display of taste in putting the ribs together: seeing that the *panaches*, being thicker and more openly displayed than the *brins*, afford a greater field for elaborate ornamentation. The *feuille* is made of a larger variety of substances than the frame. It may be of silk, satin, painted or stained paper, printed or embossed paper, gilt or silvered paper, parchment, lamb's skin, kid, chicken skin, lace, tulle, gauze, crêpe, vellum, tambour-work, gold or silver tissue, peacocks' or pheasants' feathers, &c. A very frequent kind is, paper on one side and silk on the other. Artists of every degree of skill in water-colours are employed in painting the *feuilles*; where cheapness is not studied, there the Watteaus and Bouchers, the Roqueplans and Gavarnis, the Boulangers and Duprés, and many other names of note, may be met with; while, at the other end of the scale, children who can merely dab a few bits of bright colour on a fan meet with ready employment. Pictures printed from copper-plates, and coloured by hand, form the *feuilles* of vast numbers of fans; as

do likewise various kinds of chromolithographs. The feuille has its peculiar folds given to it before being mounted on the frame, and glued to the prolongations of the inner ribs.

The making of the different parts of a fan is usually conducted by the workpeople at their own houses; where a piercer, out of a little bit of watch-spring, will provide himself with the tiny saws which pierce the beautiful open-work of some fans. The makers of the frames and feuilles mostly reside in the country districts; while the engravers, printers, lithographers, painters, colourists, mounters, illuminators, &c., are mostly congregated at Paris. The *éventailiste*, besides superintending the mounting, decorating, and finishing at his own establishment, furnishes instructions for the country workers; he supplies the drawings to suit the frequent changes of fashion, instructs the *feuilleists* as to the style of ornament, groups together the frames and feuilles, and decides upon the last finish with tassel and sheath. Most of the work is, as may readily be supposed, small handicraft labour; yet not wholly so, for the stamping-press is now much used in cutting out and embossing the various materials.

As to the oriental fan, it differs in many ways from the European. The Indian fans are seldom made to close; nor do the lazy possessors take the trouble to fan themselves. Some of them, affixed to central handles, are gorgeously enriched with embroidery and jewels; others resemble a curtain suspended from a silver rod, which is held horizontally by an attendant, and waved backwards and forwards; others, again, are of the circular standard-form, the fan being attached to the top of a silver staff, and swung to and fro by an attendant, who rests the lower end of the staff on the ground. Some of the Chinese fans are made in a curious way of beads and pearls. Very clever, and often very beautiful, fans are made of the divided leaf of the *Borassus flabelliformis*, which emits a fragrant perfume; of the *Khus-khus* grass; of

thin sheets of sandal-wood; of bamboo; and of the palmyra leaf.

Some of the fans in this collection are, as may be expected, quite as remarkable for their singularity as their beauty. One or two of the Chinese fans have pictures with that impossible perspective which our willow-pattern plates have rendered familiar to us. One, of English make, exhibits Cupids working lustily away in forging and sharpening Love's arrows. A French fan has the mount apparently made up of eight-and-twenty assignats and other kinds of paper-money, belonging to the stirring times of the Revolution: a queer sort of Stock-Exchange idea, worked out in plain printed paper and plain rosewood handle. Not less curious is the fan, made about the same time, mounted with an engraving of the bust of Mirabeau, and scenes from his life. Celebrated sayings of his—such as '*Je combattrai le facteurs de tous les parties*'—fill up small spaces in the design. One, a splendid production of the time of the unfortunate Louis XVI., may be truly called a toilet fan; for the feuille, painted in medallion on silk, represents the toilet of a lady of the Court, all embroidered and bespangled; while the ivory handle is carved with figures representing a lady's toilet. A fan of the seventeenth century has a most elaborately-drawn pen-and-ink picture of a meeting of an Academy of the Sciences. A French fan of the last century very well represents that odd medley of courtly life with heathen mythology which was at that time so much in favour among painters; the marriage of Louis XV. is being solemnized on Mount Olympus, attended by Jupiter, Juno, and Apollo, and surmounted by the arms of France and Poland. A Revolutionary fan has a painting representing the Assembly of the States-General in 1789; with, on the back or reverse, a statistical account of the revenue and expenditure for that year! A Spanish fan, belonging to Mrs. Layard (now ambassador at Madrid), presents, painted on a kid feuille, the signs of the Zodiac, and a printed almanac

marked with some historical event for each day. An English fan of the last century is mounted with a printed copy of the Laws of Whist—thereby enabling a lady of quality to keep herself cool and at the same time to attend to her rubber.

Happily, this is not the last Exhibition of the kind we shall have. It is the first fruit of a plan, formed by those who have the power of carrying it into effect, for reviving the production of fans in England as a branch of Fine Art applied to industry, especially suitable for the employment of female artists. There is, as we all know, to be an International Exhibition next year, the first of an annual series; and it is in contemplation to include fans among the exhibits. Her Majesty—always alive to the value of these pleasant and instructive gatherings—has given the matter a start by the offer of a handsome money-prize for the best fan exhibited next year: being either a work of painting or carving, or a combination of both, and executed by a female artist under twenty-five years of age. The Society of Arts offers a gold medal

for the fan second in merit; while Lady Cornelia Guest and the Baroness Meyer de Rothschild offer prizes of ten pounds each for the third and fourth in merit. Princess Louise, whose artistic taste lends an additional grace to her amiability, has signified her intention of preparing a fan of her own handiwork for next year's Exhibition. The Science and Art Department will also contribute towards the same end. It is this department which has lately organised a system of Art-teaching for women; and the Loan Exhibition of Fans is regarded as an incentive. The department, in soliciting the good offices of the owners, pointed out that the fans most to be selected are those which present examples of the best art applied to their ornamentation; that the beauty or novelty of the materials and manufacture should also be attended to; and that an attempt should be made to show the changes of fashion in form and ornamentation. It must be admitted that these recommendations have been responded to in an admirable way.



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THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

BY A PERIPATETIC.

ON THE THAMES.

I SUPPOSE that at times, amid all the rush of business and amusement at the busiest and most amusing time of the year, the Londoner gets very tired of London. He finds, indeed, that he cannot keep the pace unless he alternates glimpses of the country with residence in town. He constantly migrates from the Saturday to the Monday; and whether or not he is a legislator for the empire, he is truly glad of the Easter and Whitsuntide recess. Like the Laureate's hero—

'I hate the squares and streets,
And the faces that one meets,
Hearts with no love for me.'

On a brilliant burning day the notion of vulgar work becomes repulsive to one's finer feelings, and, like the Latin poet, we long for a cool valley, by some river side, beneath an abundance of pleasant foliage. This year the spring was so very long in coming on. One heard rumours of enormous icebergs, ever so many miles in length, cooling the Gulf Stream and threatening to spoil the spring altogether. In the early spring, which ought to have been late in spring, it was quite pitiable to see the ladies go to her Majesty's drawing-room. In front of Buckingham Palace round to the Riding School and up Grosvenor Place was there an unceasing string of carriages; and beautifully-dressed ladies—'I love that beauty should go beautifully'—for an interminable time were sitting with arms, bust, and shoulders bare, in a cutting, unwholesome wind, even without closing the windows of their carriages. In the benevolence of his heart, the Peripatetic felt strongly inclined to urge upon them that they should send for cloaks and shawls; but his conventionality proved too strong, and he left them to perish of phthisis and bronchitis. At last the spring made a desperate push to get to the front, and there was even a sudden blaze of

hot weather, a short time before the Derby Day. Then it suddenly occurred to the Peripatetic that it would be good for him to cool himself. Sudden gleams of woods and waters passed before his mental eye as he took the shady side of Bond Street, and followed Mr. Disraeli's advice in looking at the fish on the cool marble slabs, or contemplating the delicious ortolans, pretty birds that should be too pretty to be killed. Then the idea suddenly suggested itself that I should betake myself to the Thames and hire a boat, and lie down beneath the trees, and alternate my boating with talk and books. Take the hint, friendly reader: fling a few things together, go down in a Hansom to Paddington or the South Western, and go off to the Thames—some thirty miles up the river is best—and stay for the few hours, or days, or weeks that may be most pleasing to you.

In the course of my wanderings in the Thames district I think I only met a single tourist who, accompanied by his wife, was working through the country, and this amid as lovely scenery and famous localities as southern England can show. I was continually passing and repassing the Thames, and spent a good deal of time on the water. The fishing towns and villages are now generally busy, and the comfortable hostels at the water-side full to overflowing. The closing of the river during the month of May has had the effect of making the fishing villages dull for the time, but has been very beneficial in stocking the water. The quantity of small fish in the river is enormous; and the whole course of the Thames, in its season, is thickly studded with punts. The punting fishermen are interesting, because a patient and withal an enthusiastic people. They have a kind of conversation of their own. One has just arrived, in pursuit of his annual

custom of spending two months of the year in fishing. Another has sent back his carriage, and intends to punt home so far as Teddington. Another, an inveterate punter of eighty, from absence of mind or some other cause, has tilted from his chair into seven feet of water, and narrowly escaped drowning. Another has been informed, by telegraph, that a very big trout has been seen near a certain weir, and has taken lodgings until such time as the trout should be caught or disposed of. It is to be observed that the parlours of most of the angling inns display a stuffed trout in a glass case, with an extract from the local paper setting forth when it was caught and the number of pounds it weighs. This serves to fire the angler with a noble ambition, or to cheer his drooping spirits. From the immense number of fishermen, and the abundant supplies which the fishes find for themselves near their fertile banks, I should not think the Thames the best kind of fishing-ground. I see the punters are obliged to resort to the unsportsmanlike custom of raking the bed of the river to force the retired gudgeon into the actual contemplation of the bait. This brief allusion may be pardoned to a worthy and much-enduring race, with whom I frequently came in friendly collision. When I explained that I did not care for fishing, and was simply out on tourist purposes, they regarded me as a harmless lunatic; which was very much my own opinion concerning them. The river scenery is certainly something wonderful. I know of nothing more beautiful than the Thames from Eton to Pangbourne. Excepting London and Oxford, I know the Rhine better than I know the Thames; and in most respects I give this reach of the river a distinct preference over the Rhine. Less grand, it is much more lovely, and the towns and seats near the banks are not inferior in historic interest. It ought to be said, however, that the expense of travelling at home is not lighter than travelling on the Continent, and that you do not get so much for your money

in the way of commons and company. In some out-of-the-way localities you sometimes find the most unsophisticated prices. A learned friend has been telling me that after a long and conscientious investigation of the subject, he is satisfied that, upon the whole, iced champagne is the most wholesome beverage for his daily drink. He might overcome the difficulty about the ice by dropping the bottle in the cool Thames waters; but my learned friend would find a preliminary difficulty in procuring any light wines. It is in spring, and in spring only, that the foliage has that delicious exquisite green which painters so love. You cannot get such masses of this lovely colour in higher perfection than in the Undercliff, Isle of Wight, and in the valley of the Thames. You get it splendidly in driving along the Long Walk, from the Castle gates to George III.'s statue.

I had the opportunity of observing the extraordinary precautions taken on the occasion of her Majesty's journey northward. The Paper of Special Instructions, furnished to all the railway officials and the police, is quite a curiosity in its way. The train is timed to a second for each station. A pilot engine precedes for a quarter of an hour. There is not only telegraph communication from the break-vans to the engine, but the electric instrument and apparatus are conveyed in the royal train. A telegraphic communication could thus at once be made on the line, the notice paper says, 'the call for which will be L. L. To this signal precedence must be given.' The telegraph clerks of the station when the train is passing are to report both to the next station and to the last station the fact of the passing train, and are to watch the instruments until they are relieved. The danger signals are to be kept for fifteen minutes after the train has passed, and the line is to be kept clear for twenty minutes before. None of the public are on this occasion to be admitted; and the servants of the company are to perform the necessary work on the platforms

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without noise, and no cheering or other demonstration must be allowed—the object being that her Majesty shall be perfectly undisturbed during the journey.' And so with all precautions the royal train flashed through the night, crossing and recrossing the imperial river.

Pacing the Castle Terrace, or, better still, making the circuit of the Keep, it is impossible not to be struck with the great number of points in the landscape connected with the literary history of England. The two greatest names in our literature, Shakespeare and Milton, are connected with Windsor. That very morning I had seen on the Windsor walls the announcement that the 'Merry Wives' was to be performed. There is the spot where Herne's oak—or what was reckoned such—stood till a year or two ago; and a little on is Datchet Mead, the scene of the troubles of Sir John Falstaff. Close by, below the railway bridge, is the little island of Black Pots, where worthy Sir Henry Wotton built himself a little fishing-place, and whither Izaak Walton used annually to resort. Three miles from Windsor you see the old church of Horton, with the twin yews in front, where Milton's mother lies buried, and where he spent some of the most active years of his intellectual life. Yonder is a still more picturesque churchyard, that of Stoke Pogis, where Gray wrote the *Elegy*, and where he lies buried. Before us is the forest associated with the genius of Pope and recollections of Arbuthnot and Swift. Following the course of the Thames, a little beyond Magna Charta Island and the fine downs of Runnymede, you have Cowper's Hill. The whole course of the Thames has its literary souvenirs. At Great Marlow, Shelley wrote 'The Revolt of Islam.' Beyond is Bisham Abbey, with its recollections of the early days of Queen Elizabeth, and Medmenham Abbey, and its wild traditions of Wilkes and his monks. The list might be increased indefinitely, if the noble chapel of Eton College, fronting the Castle and rising above the foliage of the

Playing Fields, might be allowed to suggest its associations. Simply to visit such localities would be a pleasure; and, without aspiring to be original, it would be a pleasure to verify what had been written in reference to them. The best way to realise the associations of scenery is to know and love the literature that inspired them; as when Gray, in his *Letters*, describes Burnham Beeches, or Pope draws the description, which has still so much truth, of Windsor Forest.

But, after all, the best effect of a brief retirement from town is the silence and solitude, the rippling of the stream, of the foliage, of the air; the opportunity of a little quiet thought, the introspect, the prospect, the retrospect. The Lotophagi were right—

'We never fold our wings,
Nor cease our wanderings,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm,
Or hearken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm."'

'There is no joy but calm.' Exactly. That just suits the Thames, and sums up the philosophy of the punt.

THE CHRIST CHURCH OUTRAGE.

The recent outrage at Christ Church has excited a great deal of annoyance and much real pain among those who are acquainted with the ways of 'the House.' The escapade itself was unfortunate; but the most unfortunate thing about it was that it should find its way into the newspapers. If all the Christ Church rows were published with equal detail, they would furnish a good many exciting columns, and matter for a series of virtuous-indignation leaders in the penny papers. Most Oxford men will remember several notorious cases in which Christ Church men have been accused of offences which might very properly have been tried at the criminal bar. They excited a great deal of scandal in the university, but luckily they were kept out of the papers. I remember a member of a late Government saying that he fully expected that some member of the House of Commons

would rise in his place and ask the Home Secretary if he knew anything of certain occurrences at Christ Church. The right honourable gentleman little thought that one of his nearest relatives was at the bottom of all the mischief to which he referred. There has always been at Christ Church a fast, unscrupulous, extravagant set, who have never taken the least serious interest in the studies of the place, and are content to scrape through the mere pass examination, or to reside as long as they can without encountering any examination at all. I am a Christ Church man myself, and, while desiring to meet the facts fully and fairly, I still think there is a great deal of undue exaggeration respecting them, and unjust inference. The 'rat-catcher' set at Christ Church, to use a phrase current in my day, were lightly esteemed, and did not number largely, and formed a very moderate percentage on the numbers of the largest college in Oxford. Moreover, when we inquire into most of the Christ Church rows, there is less of crime in them than sheer nonsense and frivolity.

It was so with this last row. As the facts were told, they looked exceedingly black in the first instance. The case looked one of felony—a felony which the authorities might not be able to compound. Afterwards the case assumed a much milder complexion. It was a curious thought which suggested to the wild undergraduate mind the thought of the raid on the library. The solitude of that splendid library is very rarely invaded by the undergraduate. You may get the use of a key for a half-crown fee to the librarian, and then study books, or statues, or paintings to any extent in undisturbed seclusion. I have heard of the present Dean, when a young man, doing much of his celebrated 'Lexicon' here before breakfast of a morning; but these legends of superhuman industry, vaguely reported and dimly believed, have hardly the faintest counterpart in the present day. I remember a man being asked by Dean Liddell at collections, what Sophocles he knew.

'I know all Sophocles,' was the aspiring reply. 'Ah,' said Dr. Liddell, quietly, 'I wish I did.' A neat reply, which considerably shut up the young man. But the library is very little known to men of the House, unless when showing the Guise collection of pictures to their visitors. Now, if these young men had been bent only on the most mischievous kind of frolic they could devise, in a few minutes they might have done thousands of pounds of mischief. There are some pictures in that collection which were almost priceless—as the world recognized at the Manchester Art Exhibition—and they could, without much difficulty, be cut to pieces and destroyed. Then we have the Chantrey busts, with their vacant pedestal. Chantrey refused to do the bust of George IV. until the King had paid him for his bust of George III. Now it was pure whim which induced young men, apparently hard-up for a way of exhibiting their animal spirits, to take Mr. Munro's bust of Dean Gaisford and some others out of the abode and deposit them in quad. To give them a moustache, fling something over the shoulders, stick a cigar in the mouth, was probably the extent of the mischief meditated. It was intensely silly and boyish; but I do not think there is anything more to be said. It was not so bad as climbing over into a private garden of the House, and demolishing everything, right and left, that the garden had contained. If the frolic had stopped at this point, we should have heard nothing more about it. But the demon of discord hovering over Christ Church—I believe that is a classical way of expressing oneself—sent another mischievous party roaming about Christ Church to view these sacred effigies. To roam about the House at midnight, and to do what little harm that can be done in the rooms of friends who have imprudently neglected to sport oaks—upsetting everything in the rooms, which is called haymaking—is a nocturnal employment congenial to the undergraduate mind. Pleading, also, is it to have a great midnight bonfire, and let the ruddy

blaze overtop Canterbury Quad into Oriel Street. I remember, in my time, a raid being made into the lecture-room, and some forms, chairs, and indifferent pictures being carried away, together with wheelbarrows and ladders belonging to some workmen, to form a glorious fire in Peckwater Quad. Of course the censors or tutors would hurry to the spot, if they had heard what had happened; but the real offenders would have scurried off, and generally they could only seize and severely reprimand some timid freshman who had hurried to the spot through some alarm of fire. In the case I have mentioned, the matter was condoned through the chief offender sending a cheque for about a hundred pounds, which covered all damages. The same course might have been adopted in the present instance—and any amount of money would have been forthcoming to avoid expulsion—if the true proportions of the occurrence had been known at the time. The first band of revellers had had their skylarking and retired from the field. Enter to them a second band, who are seized with the idea of having a blaze and blackening those venerable countenances. The silly boys were probably dismayed when they found the marble calcined into lime, and discovered that they had been vulgar Goths and Vandals in destroying a work of art. If the transaction had been designed and complete from beginning to end, the offence would have deserved something more than any measure of collegiate punishment; but the responsibility thus divided, makes the offence lighter than many that have been condoned. Great must have been the consternation of the Christ Church dons, when they found the effigies of the greatest of all dons, Dean Gaisford—albeit a German commentator did choose to call him *Gaisfordius excior quis*—thus maltreated. It would not fail to suggest to their minds the mutilation of the *Hermæ*, previous to the Sicilian expedition, and, in its way, excited as much terror and disgust as that famous and mysterious event.

Expulsion is a punishment of a very varying effect. To men intended for a public or professional career it is simply ruin; to other men it is little more than a mere occurrence of a moment. At some institutions it has been a method tried on a large scale. Dr. Arnold made Rugby a great school by expelling boys, or forcing them to leave, or refusing to admit them when they would do the school discredit; a system that has been extensively imitated by succeeding masters of public schools. You may weed a school or college very completely this way, but it perhaps involves some hardship to parents, and after all bad boys must go to school or college as well as good. There are always a slight sprinkling of men at Christ Church who might be told to take their names off the books very advantageously to the interests of the university. The records of hall, chapel, and lecture-room, and the entries in the porter's book indicate the suspicious or the *suspectes d'être suspectes*. A man whose general character is high may now and then do some extraordinary breach of discipline, without being called to account for it, whereas a man of indifferent repute, for a minor breach of discipline, would be sure to receive the censor's compliments, and the censor would be glad to speak to him the first thing after chapel. So true it is that one man may take a horse while another may be hanged for looking over a hedge. Some extraordinary freaks have been done at Christ Church by very quiet men in some sudden ebullition, and their character has stood so well with the authorities that they have never been suspected. I am not at all surprised that in this last outbreak some suspected men have been discovered to be innocent, and some unsuspected men have been shown to be culprits.

But I cannot help thinking, with a well-informed man who wrote a very sensible leader on the subject in the 'Times,' that if these young men have sinned against the House, there are also respects in which Christ Church sins against its undergraduates. Young men at Ox-

ford have a social and moral life on which the college system fails even to infringe. Now and then young men are invited by dons to a wine or an evening party, but they merely show themselves as on parade and pass by unnoted. Dean Liddell is one of our greatest scholars, and one of the most just and upright of men, but it can hardly be said that he has obtained that popularity which is almost the duty of the ruler of a great society. Cannot the Dean, Canons, and Tutors of Christ Church do something more to win the confidence, to raise the moral tone, to increase the happiness and self-respect of that large and important section of English youth intrusted to their care, nearly all of whom are possible magistrates and legislators, and probably much also that is higher? Christ Church has many great traditions to uphold, but the governing body does not seem to see the way very clearly how to uphold or extend them. Perhaps the imparting some element of home life into collegiate life, the tutors seeking direct personal influence over the men, as sometimes has been done at Balliol and elsewhere, the seeking of personal friendship, which young men are mostly so generously ready to confer, might do something towards weaning undergraduates from practical jokes, and of awakening them into some wide and true ideas of the duties and destinies of life.

FLOWER SHOWS AND FANCY FAIRS.

The revolving summer as it comes round restores to us once more the pleasing phenomena of the flower show and the fancy fair. They form certainly the most ingenious instrumentation ever devised by the ladies with the single object of the extraction of coin from that unworthy gender which has usurped the power of the purse. The twin institutions have covered the country with such a perfect network that it is almost hopeless to expect that any man will be able to escape the toils. We have no doubt that flower shows were originally

devised by fair ladies, who certainly furnish the most delicate and delicious blooms of all to such institutions. They also effect an incalculable amount of good, for there is hardly a village that does not hold its little horticultural fête, and the good effect is spread over many thousand smiling gardens throughout the country. But the flower shows are no longer presided over by the graces—they are generally managed by rough-handed gardeners and a hirsute committee of the local gentry. The institution of the bazaar or the fancy fair is exclusively the ladies' domain, and we regret to say that they have an unbusinesslike way of doing business. A worthy bishop the other day, when taking the chair at an institution of this sort, made some very ungracious and unflattering remarks on them, and I really think that he was very hard upon them, for sometimes they don't do so very much wrong, and if they do, they do wrong with the best intentions.

I beg to say that I know fancy fairs to which the bishop's criticisms will not apply in the least degree. I am bound to admit, however, that these exceptions chiefly apply to provincial districts, and the rules of commercial virtue have hardly penetrated to the fancy fairs of Belgravian demoiselles. Generally speaking, the taste for the fancy fair survives, but the original spirit which animated it is lost. Originally the ladies worked hard at a hundred elegant and useful things, or made great sacrifices of little personal objects very dear to them, sustained by the enthusiasm of a great cause. But now they do not give away much of their own, and they find it easier to order in a lot of things from the shops, and they demand exorbitant prices for what they sell. Still the old style of thing often survives in its best form. As you go about the Little Peddlings of the world you will find the young ladies of such obscure localities are for weeks and months busily employing their fair fingers in industrious work that has for its object the maintenance of the pariah schools, the warming of the church, or the

building of a parsonage for the popular parson. It is also to be noticed that the age of elegant trifling has gone by, and young ladies when sensibly brought up have an eye to the useful, and, in the case of a bazaar, to the market state of supply and demand for such wares as they fabricate. They charge as much as they think they are likely to get for mere admission, and I do not see how the most rigid bishop can object to what is simply a matter of free choice. Their prices are very much the same as the shops—much to the indignation of the shopkeepers, with whom the bazaars are often no favourites. If the clergyman is rigid he will not even allow a raffle, and his wife will not approve of a flirtation. And yet the fancy fair will flourish even under such ungenial conditions. I have seen indeed some innovations made with the happiest results. The stall system was discouraged as leading to rivalry, and the ladies officiated at different times behind the imitation counter as amateur shopwomen. During the evening they perform pieces of music, and so produce a kind of drawing-room where all classes might pleasantly associate together, and we think the country thus gives hints which may be advantageously followed in town.

The London bazaar is certainly iniquitous enough. Flirting is almost the end and aim of the institution, but its best effects are sometimes painfully counteracted by extreme voracity in obtaining high prices. There are a number of pretty little legends about fancy fairs, of men who have given sovereigns for flowers and a ten-pound note for a lock of hair. It almost seems as if young ladies were resolutely bent on sounding the lowest depths of an adorer's purse, as if the traditional worldly mamma was resolved to draw from trifles some light on the subject of settlements. The most enamoured adorer might, however, be a little cooled by reflecting that he was thus prodigally drained. The plea 'Remember it's for a charity' is supposed to cover every kind of immoderate pressure and entreaty. Perhaps the worst thing in this line

used to be the theatrical fancy fair at the Crystal Palace, but I am told that this is now placed upon a better footing. Mr. Trollope, in his 'Miss Mackenzie,' makes his Guardsmen use very bad language because young ladies charged them five shillings each for looking through a peephole and five shillings for writing their names on a slip of paper. Many worse things, however, might be told of the bazaars. Unless they can be altered into something better, it is an open question whether they should not be abolished altogether. The Peripatetic hereby announces his intention of taking notice of such institutions during the summer and autumn, with a view of promulgating a timely scheme of reform respecting their character and uses.

STRAY NOTES ON BOOKS.

Earl Stanhope, in his 'Reign of Queen Anne,'* has given us a work which will be of decided service to students of history, but which provokes an odious comparison, of which the critics have made a good deal. He designs his work as a link between his own history from the Peace of Utrecht and Lord Macaulay's fragmentary fifth volume. It is not given to every one to draw the bow of Achilles, and it is impossible to read this book without feeling how painfully destitute of eloquence, imagination, and historical genius Earl Stanhope is. It might have been better called a *Life of Marlborough*, and the real book to compare with it is Sir Archibald Alison's '*Life of Marlborough*.' Lord Stanhope need not shrink from a comparison with Alison as an historian. In some points of view he need not shrink from a comparison with Macaulay. He is a much more honest writer. We are always quite free from that feeling of suspicion which continually haunts Macaulay's pages. We find here a much calmer, a much juster estimate of William III. and Marlborough. He often refers to Macaulay, and gives the following

* 'History of England: comprising the Reign of Queen Anne until the Peace of Utrecht, 1701—1713.' By Earl Stanhope. Murray.

little anecdote: 'He pointed out to me that the ancient device of the Templars had been two knights upon one horse, to indicate the original poverty of their order; and he observed that the same device might be as aptly applied to the modern members of the Temple—two barristers at least to one cause.' Lord Stanhope has a very interesting argument, to show that in the reign of Queen Anne people were much more happy and contented than they are in the reign of Queen Victoria. It is in the last chapter, entitled 'The Age of Anne,' that we especially feel Lord Stanhope's inferiority to Lord Macaulay. Macaulay was always happiest when he got away from his politics to the domain of pure literature. In the whole range of literature there is no period which he knew so thoroughly and with which he sympathised so thoroughly as the age of Anne. As we read these meagre pages we cannot but recal how Macaulay would have revelled in the subject, and would have crowded his pages with exhaustless and brilliant illustrations of the subject. We must, however, say that to those who really study history this cannot fail to be a very serviceable volume. It is perhaps, however, the least service of the many valuable services which Lord Stanhope has rendered to the country. To him we owe many valuable historical books, and the National Portrait Gallery—public services of no ordinary kind.

Mr. Kingsley, in his 'Madam How and Lady Why,'* has given us one of his best books, not destined perhaps to be as popular as his novels, but certainly as valuable as anything which he has done in science, and much more valuable than anything he has done in history. He calls it a book for children, but children of very large growth indeed, who are often deplorably ignorant of scientific truth, may be put by this work in the right groove for an infinite expansion of their ideas. Mr. Kingsley is no less noted for his

science than for his protests against the dogmatism and materialism of scientific men. There are some bright, pungent sentences which we especially commend to the attention of some of the savants. 'Then you are fast asleep, and perhaps that is the best thing for you; for sleep will (so I am informed, though I never saw it happen, nor any one else) put fresh grey matter into your brain; or save the wear and tear of the old grey matter, or something else, when they have settled what it is to do: and if so, you will wake up with a fresh fiddlestring to your little fiddle of a brain, on which you are playing new tunes all day long. So much the better; but when I believe your brain is you, pretty boy, then I shall believe also that the fiddler is his fiddle.' Similarly Mr. Kingsley quotes Herder. 'The organ is in no case the power that works it; which is as much as to say,' proceeds Mr. Kingsley, 'that the engine is not the engine-driver, nor the spade the gardener.'

A wonderful little book for the student is Mr. Bond's 'Handy-Book of Dates.*' Mr. Bond is well and very favourably known to all who frequent the library of the Rolls, and is the Assistant Keeper of the Public Records. He, if any man, knows the importance of verifying dates, and the ingenuity of his method and the wide range of his readings will be evident to every student. The work indeed appeals to an esoteric circle both of readers and of critics, and these will not be slow to estimate the substantial help afforded to them. Mr. Bond truly points out that the mere knowledge of the fact that an event occurred is of little worth *per se*, unless the true place in the history of the world of the event in question is also known. This is one of those valuable books which it is the interest of all true scholars to praise and make known.

A work on the 'Discovery of the

* 'Madam How and Lady Why; or, First Lessons in Earth Lore for Children.' By Rev. Charles Kingsley, M.A. Bell and Daldy.

* 'Handy-Book of Rules and Tables for Verifying Dates with the Christian Era.' By John J. Bond, Assistant Keeper of the Public Records. Bell and Daldy.

Great West,"* published indeed by Mr. Murray, but we imagine printed in America, only meagrely fulfils the expectations set forth by the title. By the 'Great West' the author means the valleys of the Mississippi and the Lakes; and Mr. Parkman has industriously searched private sources and the public archives of France. The volume is rather of American than general interest, and its hero is that great pioneer of civilisation, La Salle, who was assassinated on the prairie by some of his unworthy followers. It is satisfactory to know that the wretched scoundrels were soon afterwards murdered themselves, according to that rapid system of crime and recrimination which has always been predominant in the Far West. La Salle achieved a great geographical discovery, and for a time it proved fruitless, and has only yielded one of the most wild and mournful of the American narratives of discovery. We imagine that our readers will hardly find it worth while to go fully into the narrative, unless for the sake of tracing the character of the Jesuit missions.

'Rustic Adornments for Homes of Taste.†' It is now twelve years since the second edition of this book was exhausted. Messrs. Groombridge now bring forward a third, more handsome than ever. Fully two hundred illustrations on wood

and in colour illustrate the text which takes up the adornments of the house and the garden. It is a charming volume, and we cannot do better than allow the author to explain himself in the following lines from the Preface: 'Its purport is to enlarge the circle of domestic pleasures and home pursuits; to quicken observation of natural phenomena so that the meanest of familiar things shall become eloquent in praise of beneficence and beauty; to strengthen family ties and affections by multiplying the sources of mutual sympathy; and to cheer the loneliest with amusements that tend to cheerfulness, and afford solace and variety, where, but for such reliefs, life might become unbearably monotonous and wearisome. Whatever may be our views of life, religion, and duty, such recreations as are herein described are not likely to clash with them, but they may help the soul in its aspirations by conducting it away from disturbing scenes, and surrounding it with an atmosphere of health and peacefulness. Happy he who by experience can enter into the full meaning of Coleridge's exquisite lines on the lark in his "Tears in Solitude:"—

There he might lie on fern or withered heath,
While from the singing lark, that sings unseen,
The minstrelsy that solitude loves best,
And from the sun, and from the breezy air,
Sweet influences trembled o'er his frame;
And he with many feelings, many thoughts,
Made up a meditative joy, and found
Religious meanings in the forms of nature;
And so, his senses gradually wrapt
In a half-sleep, he dreams of better worlds;
And dreaming hears thee still, O singing lark,
'That sleepest like an angel in the clouds.'

* 'The Discovery of the Great West: an Historical Narrative.' By Francis Parkman. Murray.

† 'Rustic Adornments for Homes of Taste.' By Shirley Hibberd. Groombridge and Sons.



SONG OF THE SMOKE-WREATHS.

Sung to the Smokers.

NOT like clouds that cap the mountains,
 Not like mists that mask the sea,
 Not like vapours round the fountains—
 Soft and clear and warm are we.

Hear the tempest, how its minions
 Tear the clouds and heap the snows;
 No storm-rage is in our pinions,
 Who knows us, 'tis peace he knows.

Soaring from the burning censers,
 Stealing forth through all the air,
 Hovering as the mild dispensers
 Over you of blisses rare,

Softly float we, softly blend we,
 Tinted from the deep blue sky,
 Scented from the myrrh-lands, bend we
 Downward to you ere we die.

Ease we bring and airy fancies,
 Sober thoughts with visions gay,
 Peace profound, with daring glances
 Through the clouds to endless day.

Not like clouds that cap the mountains,
 Not like mists that mask the sea,
 Not like vapours round the fountains—
 Soft and clear and warm are we.

L. T. A.

Valetta, Malta.

TAKING A HEADER.

DOWN through the sapphire pavement
 That roofs the sea-god's world
 I shall pass with the speed of a shooting star
 From heaven's turret hurled.
 I have sworn, as I stripped for battle,
 To wrest the emerald throne
 From Neptune and Amphitrite,
 They have reigned too long alone.

To my feet the servile billows
 Creep with a fawning smile,
 But I know too well such creatures,
 Their wrath o'erlaid with guile;
 And I stand like a naked athlete
 Scorning the rabble's roar,
 Till in wilder insurrection
 They foam on the gleaming shore.

I will tear the crown of coral
 And the chains of shipwrecked gold
 From the brow and breast of Neptune,
 That tyrant grey and old.
 Alone, unarmed I'll venture
 Without talisman or spell :—
 That toll from the church tower yonder,
 Diver, may be your knell !

Oh no ! that sea of azure
 Bright in the morning sun,
 And warm as an Indian ocean
 When the summer has begun,
 Will open to the diver
 As the air does to the bird,
 And swift as an arrow shot by night
 I shall dart unseen, unheard.

Now I stand like one invoking
 Jove in his realms of cloud,
 My praying hands upraising
 Defiant still and proud,
 As the shouldering ranks of billows
 Beat on my brawny breast,
 And lash themselves to anger
 In the might of their great unrest.

Look ! the sea gulls skim around me
 With wild inquiring eyes,
 Glancing through spray and rainbow
 Like great white butterflies.

Taking a Header.

And like birds of larger pinion
 * The boats with the brown sails dart,
 And I seem to see with a keener eye,
 And to feel with a larger heart.

Flash ! as the swallow passes
 I have cleft the azure dark ;
 A gurgle, a bubble, that rose and broke—
 A glimmer, a widening spark,
 As if eyes of ocean monsters
 Were glaring to bar our reign ;—
 A flash, green light expanding,
 And I spring to life again.

But still the old enchantment
 Has hid King Neptune's door,
 And I seem to hear derision
 In the hoarse sea's louder roar ;
 When all at once a giant's voice
 Says with an angry shout,
 ' Bill, see to forty-seven,
 Ain't he ever a-coming out ?'

WALTER THORNBURY.

